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BALD AMBITION

Euro 2000 winner Barthez heads for Old Trafford

DONE DEALS

All the summer's big moves

2006 SCANDAL

Where now for the World Cup?

BIG NAME INTERVIEWS:

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WHAT was that about a summer holiday? We barely had time to catch our breath after the exhilarating events of Euro 2000 before it was off to Zurich for the vote on the 2006 World Cup. Now, starting on page 12, we review the extraordinary chain of events that led to Germany being awarded the hosting rights.

And no summer these days would be complete without a world-record transfer. We speak to the latest player to hold the title of world's most expensive footballer, Hernan Crespo, about his £37million move from Parma to Lazio. We also bring you up to date with all the major transfers of the summer so far. There are still many twists and turns left on the transfer trail (just ask Luis Figo) and we'll continue our round-up next month. The holiday will have to wait.

The news-stand price of *World Soccer* goes up by 10 pence this month. Rising production costs make that unavoidable, I'm afraid. But we'll be staying at 84 pages for the foreseeable future, giving you more for your money.

Gavin Hamilton, Editor (gavin_hamilton@ipc.co.uk)

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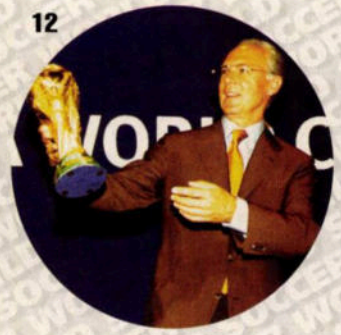

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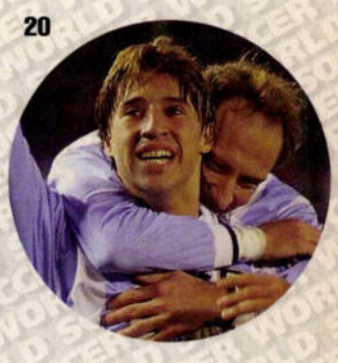

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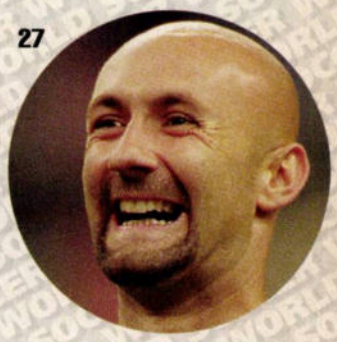

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Chart-topper...Kevin Phillips

Phillips strikes gold

SUNDERLAND'S Kevin Phillips is officially Europe's leading striker after finishing top of the Adidas Golden Shoe standings for the 1999-2000 season.

Phillips' 30 goals put him ahead of Ruud Van Nistelrooy, who scored 29 goals for PSV before sustaining the serious knee injury that ruled him out of Euro 2000. Last year's winner, Mario Jardel (FC Porto), finished third, despite scoring 38 times in the Portuguese League. A change in Portugal's UEFA co-efficient ranking meant that the Brazilian's goal tally was only multiplied by a factor of 1.5.

For Phillips the success was the culmination of a remarkable 12 months. A year ago, he had yet to make his debut in the Premier League, having just won promotion from the First Division with Sunderland. Phillips, 27, began his career at Southampton, but was released because the club did not think he was tall enough to make the top grade.

He played for non-league Baldock Town while working as a supermarket shelf-stacker before being given a second chance by Watford in 1994. Twenty-four goals in 59 games for the Hornets led to a transfer to Sunderland in the summer of 1998. Since then, he hasn't looked back.

● Last month, we incorrectly listed Jardel as top of the standings, which were based on information supplied to us by Adidas. Unfortunately, the wrong UEFA co-efficients were used to calculate the standings.

EUROPEAN GOLDEN SHOE
FINAL STANDINGS

Rank		Goals	Factor*	Points
1	Kevin Phillips (Sunderland, Eng)	30	2	60
2	Ruud Van Nistelrooy (PSV, Hol)	29	2	58
3	Mario Jardel (FC Porto, Por)	38	1.5	57
4	Salva (Racing Santander, Spa)	27	2	54
5	Pierre Van Hooijdonk (Vitesse, Hol)	25	2	50
6	Catanha (Malaga, Spa)	24	2	48
	Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink (At. Madrid, Spa)	24	2	48
	Dimitris Nalitzis (PAOK Salonika, Gre)	24	2	48
	Andrii Shevchenko (Milan, Ita)	24	2	48
	Ivica Vastic (Sturm Graz, Aut)	32	1.5	48
11	Anderson (Lyon, Fra)	23	2	46
	Gabriel Batistuta (Fiorentina, Ita)	23	2	46
	Nikos Limberopoulos (Panathinaikos, Gre)	23	2	46
	Alan Shearer (Newcastle, Eng)	23	2	46
15	Ole-Martin Arst (Gent, Blg)	30	1.5	45
	Toni Brogno (Westerlo, Blg)	30	1.5	45
	Serkan Aykut (Samsunspor, Tur)	30	1.5	45
18	Hernan Crespo (Parma, Ita)	22	2	44
	Georgi Demetradze (Alaniya Vladikavkaz, Rus)	22	2	44
	Michalis Konstantinou (Iraklis, Gre)	22	2	44
	Roy Makaay (Deportivo La Coruna, Spa)	22	2	44
	Demis Nikolaidis (AEK Athens, Gre)	22	2	44
	David Trezeguet (Monaco, Fra)	22	2	44
24	Savo Milosevic (Zaragoza, Spa)	21	2	42
	Marco Simone (Monaco, Fra)	21	2	42
26	Dwight Yorke (Manchester United, Eng)	20	2	40
27	Michael Bridges (Leeds, Eng)	19	2	38
	Arnold Bruggink (PSV, Hol)	19	2	38
	Andy Cole (Manchester United, Eng)	19	2	38
	Gomez (OFI Crete, Gre)	19	2	38
	Martin Max (1860 Munich, Ger)	19	2	38
	Luc Nilis (PSV, Hol)	19	2	38
	Andrei Tikhonov (Spartak, Rus)	19	2	38
	Jan Vennegoor of Hesselink (Twente, Hol)	19	2	38
35	Charles Amoah (St Gallen, Swi)	25	1.5	37.5
	Mark Viduka (Celtic, Sco)	25	1.5	37.5
37	Marco Ferrante (Torino, Ita)	18	2	36
	Vincenzo Montella (Roma, Ita)	18	2	36
39	Rune Lange (Tromso, Nor)	23	1.5	34.5
40	Ulf Kirsten (Bayer Leverkusen, Ger)	17	2	34
41	Alberto Acosta (Sporting Lisbon, Por)	22	1.5	33
	Vratislav Lokvenc (Sparta Prague, Cze)	22	1.5	33
43	Christian (Paris Saint-Germain, Fra)	16	2	32
	Shabani Nonda (Rennes, Fra)	16	2	32
45	Ahmet Dursin (Besiktas, Tur)	21	1.5	31.5
	Eric Gaucho (Estrela Amadora, Por)	21	1.5	31.5
	Andreas Lund (Molde, Nor)	21	1.5	31.5
	Christian Mayrleb (Austria Wien, Aut)	21	1.5	31.5
	Tomislav Sokota (Dinamo Zagreb, Cro)	21	1.5	31.5
50	Rainer Rauffman (Omonia, Cyp)	31	1	31

**The factor relates to the strength of the League in which the player plays and calculated according to the latest UEFA co-efficients*

Paul Gardner

GLOBAL VIEW

NOTES AND QUOTES

"Coaches, management and players are all mercenaries."
Hamburg's Croat midfielder Nico Kovac tells it as it is.

"He's a megalomaniac. He says pro football is rotten to the core. But he only has one wish – to join it. I prefer to laugh at him."
The president of French club Rennes, Pierre Blayau, on Ladislas Lozano, the high-profile boss of last season's French Cup giantkillers Calais.

"I have no intention of buying Marseille. I only contacted the club about a company who might be interested in taking over the reins."
Disgraced former Marseille owner Bernard Tapie on rumours of a possible comeback at the Provencal outfit.

"We have too many Argentinians in our side."
Lazio's Yugoslav sweeper Sinisa Mihajlovic shortly before the news broke that Hernan Crespo had joined the Italian champions from Parma.

A better inspection procedure would right many FIFA wrongs

I TAKE it that I don't need a sledgehammer to drive home this point: FIFA's method for selecting World Cup hosts is a shambles.

That should not come as a surprise. Anyone who was shocked by the shenanigans in Zurich on July 6 simply hasn't been paying attention.

A mere four years ago the system – supposedly based on the votes of FIFA's executive committee – was abandoned altogether.

There was no vote. It was replaced by a 'decision' of the executive committee that Japan and South Korea (the only two candidates, Mexico having dropped out) should act as co-hosts for the 2002 tournament.

FIFA president Joao Havelange had backed Japan all the way. The Koreans entered the fray later and caused all sorts of mischief. Their cause was backed by Europe, which wanted to embarrass Havelange. Japan then stepped up the spending for its bid campaign to a rumoured £58million.

At the last moment, Havelange realised that there was going to be a majority vote for Korea. He saved face by patching together the compromise. A decision based entirely on raw politics.

So in 1996 things were engineered so that there was no vote at all, while in 2000 there was a vote that is proving troublesome because of Charlie Dempsey's abstention.

Technically, I'm told, Dempsey did not abstain – rather, he refused to accept the ballot. Not the same thing, legally speaking. We'll find out if it matters.

The matter of Dempsey being told how to vote by his Oceania confederation seems to be debatable, too. Chuck Blazer, one of the three executive committee members of The Football Confederation (formerly CONCACAF), told me: "We're referred to as representatives, not delegates. If there had been a motion at a TFC congress seeking to instruct us how to vote, it would have been ruled out of order."

Whatever. From the strictly soccer point of view, none of this matters. When it comes to deciding where to play the game's showcase tournament, should we be arguing over rules of procedure and legal niceties? No, we should not. Nor should we be at the mercy of internal FIFA politics. Anti-Havelange politics decided the issue in 1996; this time it was Asia's anti-Blatter bloc vote that gave Germany the crucial votes.

How do we get rid of a procedure that involves nations in enormous expenditure on dubious – even devious – public relations campaigns and one that opens up rancorous divisions within FIFA itself?

Oh well, how about chucking all the names into a hat and deciding the winner with a draw, ha ha, how about that?

A little less of the ha, ha, if you please – this might even be a good idea.

The core of the problem, as I see it, is the voting power of the executive committee members. Take it away and you solve a large part of the problem. Maybe you'll create a few others, but maybe not.

What are these 24 guys basing their votes on anyway? Four things: 1) the report of the FIFA inspection committee; 2) what has been spoon-fed to them by the bid committees; 3) their own personal preferences and prejudices – which will have been partially shaped by 2; and 4) FIFA politics.

Reason 4 has made a sham of the last two votes. It is Reason 1 that should be the dominant one. But the inspection committee needs some inspection. It is appointed by the FIFA president and approved by the executive committee members. That does not give the appearance of a committee capable of independent judgment. Particularly when the president is loudly championing one of the candidates.

The committee is called upon to pass serious judgment on a wide range of complicated, often highly technical criteria. Yet it does not include technical experts. It has more the air of a travel award for faithful FIFA servants.

A lot of money is spent on this, both by FIFA and by the candidate countries, who lavishly receive and attempt to seduce the committee members.

Yet the committee's vital report landed on the executive committee members' desks less than a week before the vote.

My suggestion is this: turn the inspection committee into a truly independent collection of real experts. Ban anything beyond ordinary hospitality when they pay their visits. Ban the candidate countries from conducting PR campaigns. They can make their pitch once a year in Zurich before an executive committee meeting.

The revamped inspection committee will decide which countries have viable bids. The executive committee can review that decision, maybe demand a recount. After that...the names go into the hat.

A modified rotation system should certainly be included. Once a confederation has staged a World Cup, it should be barred from applying for the next two tournaments. Would it work? Does the present system work?

NOTES AND QUOTES

"The group which blew it at Euro 2000 have to repair the damage themselves. What are the alternatives? What success have we had at Under-21 and Under-18 level? We need three or four players to be the leaders of the national team. I'm thinking of myself, Oliver Kahn and Jens Nowotny."

Oliver Bierhoff on being confirmed as captain of Germany until the 2002 World Cup finals.

"I've the feeling the coach doesn't say the same things in public that he does within the squad. This coach doesn't respect me. I shall never play for Colombia again."

Veteran forward Freddy Rincon announces his international retirement after being dropped by national coach Luis Chiqui Garcia.

"The Pakistanis were treated abysmally. They were our guests and I'm personally very disappointed."

Afghan Minister of Sport Shokour Mutmaen condemns Afghan Islamic fundamentalists who shaved the heads of Pakistani players for wearing shorts. The victims were members of the Young Afghan Club from the Pakistani frontier town of Chaman, who were playing in a supposedly friendly tournament in Kandahar.

"I still have the ability – my brains are in my feet."

Paul Gascoigne's comment on joining Everton. Quite.

Nostalgia rules at Maracana

But the modern game is betraying its past, says Brian Homewood

MARACANA stadium's 50th anniversary was a nostalgic, emotion-charged day, not so much for the festivities but for who was there and what they represented.

Some of the most revered figures from Brazilian football's past turned up to sink their footprints into wet concrete, create a Hollywood-style Pavement of Fame, sing 'happy birthday' in the middle of the hallowed pitch and cut a giant Maracana-shaped cake. The illustrious list included Pele, Didi, Mario Zagallo, Gerson, Zico, Tele Santana, Nilton Santos, Jairzinho, Vivinho, Djalma Santos, Tostao, Vava, Bellini, Carlos Alberto, Roberto, Junior and Rivelino.

These were the players who, like the stadium itself, gave Brazilian football an almost mythical aura. The sight of so many of them reviving memories was a moving one and left you longing to return to the days before the Brazilian game was corrupted by European influences, sponsorship money and fabulously incompetent directors.

On the day after the Maracana's celebration, we were given a brutal reminder of how things have changed in the past 15 years or so. Flamengo and Vasco da Gama met in the second leg of the Carioca championship Final and managed to produce the astounding total of 90 fouls between them.

In countries where referees have a rough notion of the rules, a team that commits 62 fouls in a game is likely to finish it with seven or eight players and lose the match. Yet Flamengo came away with just one red card and three yellows. Even more incredibly, only one of these cards was actually for a foul. Two others were for skirmishing and the third, believe it or not, was awarded to Flamengo substitute Beto – for juggling with the ball.

Brazilian football 'ethics' are so warped that ball juggling is deemed to be ungentlemanly conduct. Beto, who decided to indulge his talents with the match settled in Flamengo's favour, was judged to have been showing off and insulting the opposition.

It is hard to imagine that any other country can have a more cynical approach to the game. In Brazil, juggling the ball in midfield is considered cowardly; hacking away a player's legs when his back is turned is considered manly; diving and feigning injury are regarded as acceptable parts of the game. Nowadays, you are lucky to see a match with fewer than 60 fouls.

> 'The deft touches of Zico, Socrates and their predecessors have been replaced by brute force'

While commentating for television on last year's World Club Cup game between Palmeiras and Manchester United in Tokyo, former Brazilian World Cup referee Jose Roberto Wright admitted: "Foreign referees don't like to give free-kicks to Brazil because Brazilian players have a reputation for diving."

Players are allowed to get away with this nonsense because referees, knowing the club directors can vet officials they do not like through backroom wheeling and dealing, hate giving red cards.

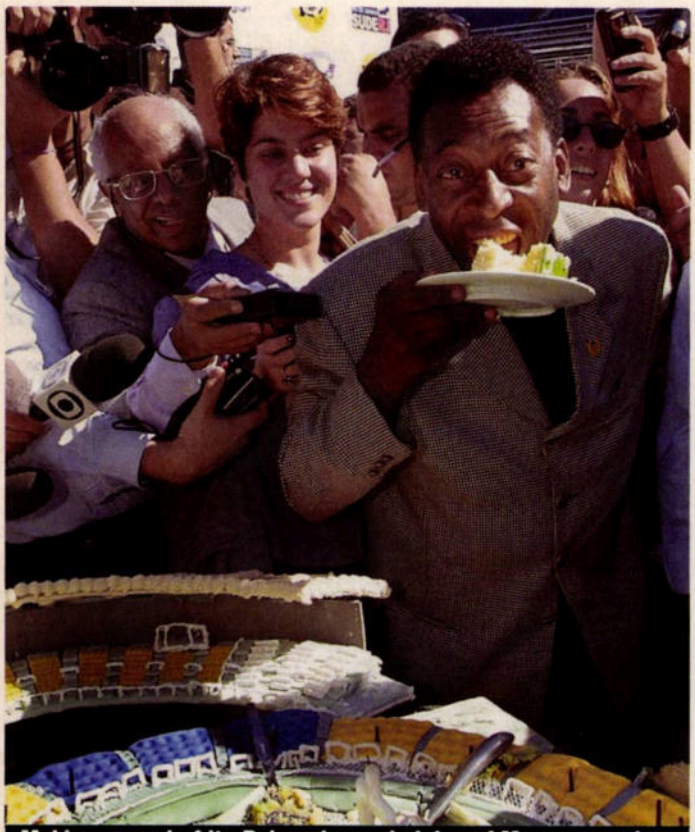
Where possible, Brazilian referees will keep their yellow cards in their pockets for the whole first half to reduce the risk of having to show the same player two yellows. Sendings-off, when they happen, are usually done in pairs. Worse still, red cards do not mean automatic suspensions. In the Paulista Final between Santos and Sao Paulo, Santos midfielder Anderson was sent off in the first leg, let off a ban, then sent off again in the second leg after spending the match kicking the opposition.

The national team managed to remain reasonably free from this butchery until the last World Cup, but under Wanderley Luxemburgo they have now taken to the use of systematic fouling to stop the opposition in midfield.

In their recent World Cup qualifier against Peru, Brazil committed 28 fouls, nearly twice as many as their opponents. Earlier this year, the Olympic team, also coached by Luxemburgo, committed 40 fouls against underdogs Venezuela, a blatant case of bullying if ever there was one,

The Brazilian team have ceased to be entertaining to watch. The quick flicks, gentle lobs and deft touches of Zico, Socrates and their predecessors have been replaced by the power and brute force of Roberto Carlos, Emerson Ferreira, Vampeta and Antonio Carlos. Ronaldo, a player whose game depends on explosive acceleration, best epitomises the switch from subtle skills to physical prowess.

The present-day Brazil are extremely difficult to play against. Their marking, aided by Luxemburgo's systematic fouling, is ferocious, their counter-attacks lethally quick and their diving extremely well executed. Psychologically, they are excellently prepared and way ahead of any of their South American rivals. But when it comes to providing entertainment value, they are a dead loss. Argentina are now far more enjoyable to watch.



Making a meal of it...Pele enjoys a helping of Maracana cake

Recently-departed Palmeiras coach Luiz Felipe Scolari was often vilified during his time in charge for publicly calling on his players to commit fouls. But 'Big Phil' claimed that nearly all of his fellow coaches did the same. "I'm stupid because I tell the truth, while the others lie," he once said.

Big Phil, ironically, was in trouble again shortly before he parted company with Palmeiras. Globo TV managed to record one of his team talks through an open dressing-room window and then broadcast it on national television. Millions of viewers heard him lambast his players following a Libertadores Cup defeat by Corinthians, and at one stage he asked why nobody had kicked the opposition player Edilson.

Luxemburgo was quick to jump on his moral high horse. "This is not the sort of thing we want for football," he said.

Scolari responded by saying: "He has worked here at Palmeiras and I know how he spoke to the players.

"A lot of the staff who are with me now used to work with him and if he wants, we can revive the team talks he gave while at the club."

Interestingly, Luxemburgo backed down from further verbal confrontation.

As Maracana celebrated its half century, Brazilian television showed some of the best goals from its history. There were some truly extraordinary moments of skill from the likes of Rivelino, Zico, Roberto and the late Garrincha. But you wondered whether those players would have been able to do their tricks in today's poisonous environment.

One former Brazil manager said recently that he found watching a re-run of the 1970 World Cup matches an exercise in patience because play was so much slower than today.

Tostao, who played alongside Pele in that team, had an eloquent reply: "As the spaces on the pitch were much bigger, it was easier for the player to shine. But if the opportunities were greater, mistakes showed up more. Players with little talent quickly showed their limitations. Today, they can get away with it.

"The speed and marking today, without the presence of talent and creativity, are far worse. They are terrible to watch. I prefer slowness to mediocrity."

Onwards and upwards

Euro 2000 sparked a major commercial feeding frenzy, says Gabriel Dabner

THE critics have praised Euro 2000 as the best football tournament yet and the new heights reached on the field were emulated off it with the global marketing of the event.

With their share of the spoils in mind, multinational companies – by fair means or foul – rushed to be associated with a tournament whose global TV audience has been estimated at between seven and 10 billion and live attendance of over one million.

Euro 2000 had 12 key sponsors and 10 official suppliers, including household names such as Coca-Cola, McDonald's and Mastercard. These 22 marketing partners between them enriched UEFA by an estimated £130million, even though their actual number was markedly down from the 1998 World Cup, when there were 45 different marketing partners.

To maintain the value of being an official sponsor, only one from each business sector was allowed, with companies paying millions of pounds for the privilege. However, for those companies that were not official sponsors, there were alternative means of ensuring that their brand was on show – so much so, in fact, that the public had difficulty in differentiating between official and unofficial sponsors.

One company leading the way in such 'ambush advertising' was Nike, especially since playing the rebel fits in with the company's brash image. While rivals Adidas had paid some £20m to be official sponsors of Euro 2000, Nike still achieved a level of brand awareness comparable to that of an official supplier.

Measures had been taken by UEFA's marketing company, ISL, to prevent ambush advertising. It took the precaution of buying up around 9,000 advertising spaces in the vicinity of the stadiums and other strategic locations. However, as ISL's marketing manager, Nicholas Hale-Woods, admitted: "The Euro 2000 organisers do not own the Benelux for six weeks, so obviously some companies will be able to associate themselves with the tournament."

Nike did this, not only through its kit deals with the two host countries, but also through an extensive billboard campaign during the tournament, and by staging 'Nike Parks' at five stadiums in Europe, including Amsterdam.

Whatever the outcome of the marketing battle, Adidas can at least console itself with the fact that it supplied kit to the majority of the teams and that one of them, France, won the Final.

The take-up of official sponsorship packages for the 2002 World Cup is already behind schedule as companies baulk at the fees being demanded. As the marketing director of one major football sponsor at the last World Cup put it: "The asking price will keep going up, but the market will only stand so much."

Gabriel Dabner writes for Soccer Investor (+44 (0)20 7329 3500)

NOTES AND QUOTES

"Instead of us spending immoral sums on big stars, our philosophy should be to get our hands on young Italian talent."
Milan president Silvio Berlusconi announces a change of tack in the transfer market. Or is it?

That's better...Molina

"Some days everything goes well, other days all is black. That's football. I had a bad time at Euro 2000, but my move to Deportivo is one of the good days."
Much-criticised Spanish keeper Jose Francisco Molina on his transfer from Atletico Madrid to champions Deportivo La Coruna

"I missed Greece too much. No sum of money could make me feel differently. The one thing that mattered to me was to return to Greece and Olympiakos. Nothing else."
Homesick Grigoris Georgatos explains why he quit Internazionale after just one season in Serie A

The backwater boys

Mark Gleeson reports on life at the bottom of the FIFA world rankings

Passion play...the Seychelles gave their all against Namibia in the World Cup qualifiers

THE idyllic Seychelle islands enjoy a reputation for pristine beaches, clear waters and warm weather. But as far as football is concerned, the country is something of a backwater.

Its isolation in the Indian Ocean and its small population (around 80,000) make it difficult for the Seychelles to be competitive on the world stage.

Over the past 10 years, the islanders have played just 17 full internationals and won just once. Their last game was a 5-0 defeat by Zimbabwe in an African Nations Cup preliminary round, second leg tie in Bulawayo on July 16.

The country have been FIFA members only since 1986 and in April played for the first time in the World Cup qualifiers, losing 4-1 on aggregate to Namibia in the African preliminary round. Their lowly FIFA ranking during the 1990s reflected the lack of activity and success.

But there are ambitious plans to give the country a better profile, starting with the employment of a Yugoslav coach and their entry for the first time into the World Cup and the African Nations Cup qualifiers.

Montenegrin Vojo Gardesevic made a big impression when coach of Kenya, his team upsetting Algeria in the preliminary round of the qualifiers for France 98.

Gardesevic, 53, was lured to the Seychelles at the end of his spell in Nairobi and given a one-year contract, later extended to three. "It might seem a bit off the map but I had a good feeling about the country and their plans," he says. "They love football madly in the Seychelles and there is an energetic president at the head of the FA with high aspirations."

That president is Suketu Patel, who also serves on the finance committee of the Confederation of African Football, and was the driving force behind the Seychelles' initiative to host the African Under-17 championship next February.

The tournament is the island's first opportunity to host such an event and will allow an exposure that the country's footballers have never had before.

"Just the enthusiasm of the people, the full stadiums, will carry the event," says Gardesevic.

The arrival of World Cup action on the island in April saw the 7,000-seater Stade Poplier in Victoria packed for the match with Namibia, which ended 1-1.

The islanders put up a stoic fight in the return leg in Windhoek, twice hitting Namibia's crossbar before running out of steam and losing 3-0.

In the Nations Cup qualifiers, the Seychelles lost the home first leg 1-0 to Zimbabwe and then the return 5-0. They have participated in three previous Nations Cup qualifying campaigns without getting past the preliminary round.

In the future, the Seychelloise hope that regular competition will someday produce an upset that will ignite the African soccer scene.

"Why not?" asks Gardesevic. "If we play from the first minute to the last we could do something. The passion is there."

THE COACH

VOJO GARDESEVIC came to Africa in the most extraordinary way, reflecting a nomadic career that has taken him to exotic destinations around the globe.

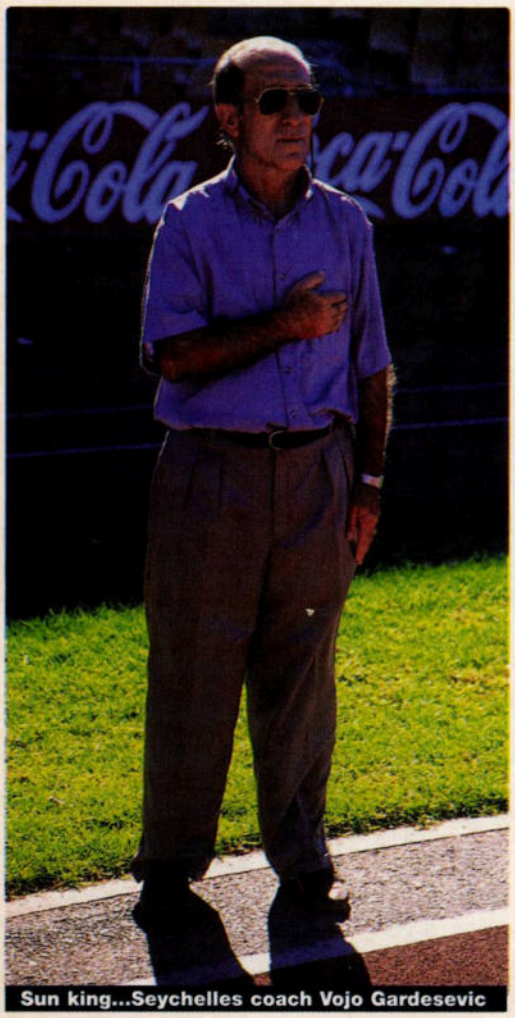
A native of the former Titograd (now Podgorica) in Montenegro, Yugoslavia, he was a player at Buducnost for 15 years and then had a three-year spell in Holland with FC Zwolle in the early 1970s. Coaching school in Sarajevo followed and then four years in Iraq with the Air Force side, the Army side and later the national team.

Gardesevic went on to work in Jordan and Kuwait. "I was on holiday back home when the Iraqi invasion occurred. I was very lucky."

He later coached OFC Titograd, during which time a major in the Kenyan army, part of the United Nations peacekeeping force in the crumbling Yugoslavia, was a regular viewer of the team's home matches.

"One day he asked me whether I'd like to go to Kenya," says Gardesevic. "At that time I was trying to get a coaching job in Japan but I promised him that if he made a firm offer for me first I'd go."

Gor Mahia, the glamour club from Nairobi, made that offer first and Gardesevic flew to Africa for the first time, winning the championship with the club in his initial season. He then got the national team job and helped



Sun king...Seychelles coach Vojo Gardesevic

Young talent...Johnny Moustache

Kenya to that win over Algeria in the France 98 qualifiers.

"Algerian soccer has never been the same since that day," he recalls proudly. But within six months he had lost the job to the German Reinhard Fabisch and went off to a post in paradise.

THE PLAYERS

MOST of the Seychelles national team players work for the island's government or in the hotels that provide much of its tourist economy. There is no such thing as a professional player on the island and often they are forced to miss training because they cannot get the time off work. The national side trains twice a week, on Tuesday nights and Sundays, but even then club commitments take priority.

The team is captained by diminutive midfielder Paul Khan, who turns 33 in October, but the most experienced player is the imposing goalkeeper, Nelson Sopha.

Coach Gardesevic has tried to introduce younger talent in recent months, including baby-faced Johnny Moustache at centre-back and 19-year-old wing-back Don Annacoura.

But it is veterans like Alpha Balde and Philip Zialor who remain the mainstay of the team; Zialor was the scorer of the team's goal against Namibia in April.

All the players are based on the island, where clubs now also import talent from countries like Kenya, Madagascar and Tanzania.

Re-entry...Ivan Dudic

Dudic makes a double debut

ON MAY 25, China played a friendly against Yugoslavia in Beijing which looks to have been the setting for what we believe to be a unique event in senior international football.

Ivan Dudic, the 22-year-old Red Star Belgrade right-back, had been selected to make his international debut. He was chosen because Zoran Mirkovic of Juventus was suspended for the opening games of Euro 2000, while Miroslav Djukic had been on duty for Valencia in the Champions League Final, played the day before.

Dudic duly completed the first half, to be replaced as one of eight half-time substitutions, by Slobodan Komljenovic. However, after 13 minutes of the second half, Nisa Saveljic was forced to go off injured, and Dudic *returned to the field* to play out the rest of the game, which the Yugoslavs won 2-0.

This, of course, begs certain questions. Does this game remain an 'official' international? Should Dudic be awarded two caps? Did the teams agree on the re-use of players before the game or on the spot?

A FIFA spokesperson confirmed that in friendly internationals both nations make an agreement before the game on individual match regulations, and that the practice of 're-using' was not illegal, except in competitive internationals.

This is the first instance we can recall of this action taking place, though if any reader can furnish us with a similar example, we would be most interested to hear about it.

Daniel Fein

Emerson takes prestigious award

Poll winner...Emerson

BAYER LEVERKUSEN midfielder **Emerson** was named Germany's Player of the Year by a voting panel that included the captains of all 18 Bundesliga clubs.

The award will be classed as a prestigious leaving present for the Brazilian if, as expected, he moves to Roma during the close season.

Emerson won by a large majority ahead of team-mate Jens Nowotny and Bayern Munich keeper Oliver Kahn.

COACHES ON THE MOVE

The managerial doors have been swinging furiously in Spain over the summer. Among a number of changes, **Raddy Antic** has signed up with Oviedo on a two-year contract having been sacked by relegated Atletico Madrid at the end of last season. Antic's predecessor, **Luis Aragones**, has taken the reins at Mallorca, replacing Fernando Vazquez.

In the Basque country, **Txetxu Rojo** has been appointed by Athletic Bilbao, who parted company with Luis Fernandez after four seasons, while former international defender **Andoni Goikoetxea** has swapped Numancia for Racing Santander.

Rojo's replacement at his former club, Zaragoza, is **Juan Manuel Lillo**, who joined on a one-year contract. At Valladolid, Argentinian **'Pancho' Ferraro** steps into Gregorio Manzano's shoes.

In England, former Under-21 boss **Peter Taylor** has been brought in by Leicester, after Martin O'Neill's move to Celtic. Bradford also have a new coach, with former assistant manager **Chris Hutchings** replacing Sheffield Wednesday-bound Paul Jewell.

Elsewhere in Europe, **Ljubisa Tumbakovic** has returned to Partizan Belgrade, whom he led to four League titles in the 1990s. He had been in charge of AEK Athens for a brief period.

Belgian side Eendracht Aalst replaced Dutchman Barry Hulshoff with **Wim De Coninck**, while in Greece Hulshoff's compatriot **Egen Gerard** stepped down at OFI Crete after 15 years in charge.

Eduard Malofeyev, the coach who steered the Soviet Union to the 1986 World Cup, has replaced Sergei Borovsky as coach of Belarus. Borovsky was fired after the national team lost three games in a row, which included a 2-0 defeat by Andorra.

Another national team appointment saw former Soviet Union international **Igor Ponomaryov** take charge of Azerbaijan. Ponomaryov, a member of the 1988 Olympic gold-medal winning team, succeeds Ahmed Aleskerov, who resigned last December.

Dutchman **Clemens Westerhof** parted company with Zimbabwe after his side lost 3-0 to Guinea in a World Cup qualifier, but almost immediately stepped into a new post. He now leads Mamelodi Sundowns in South Africa, where national coach **Trott Moloto** has agreed to step down and work as assistant to a new appointment.

Drissa Traore has been named as the new national coach of Niger, after Frenchman Jean-Francois Chaille stepped down for personal reasons.

Tchanile Bawa has replaced Mawuena Kodjovi in Togo.

Former Jamaica Under-23 coach **Clovis de Oliveira** has taken over the senior national squad following the resignation of fellow Brazilian Sebastio Lazaroni. Lazaroni, who had been head coach for only two months, was said to be frustrated at a lack of commitment from some of the senior players in the national set-up.

Finally, former Brazil national coach **Carlos Alberto Parreira** has taken over at Atletico Mineiro, succeeding Marcio Araujo. Parreira was sacked by Fluminense in February.

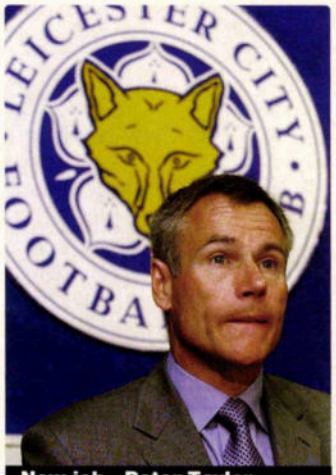
COACHES STAYING ON

Gerard Houllier has agreed a new five-year contract with Liverpool, while **Joe Royle** has signed up for another four years with newly-promoted Manchester City.

PLAYERS STAYING ON

Roberto Carlos has signed a new five-year deal with Real Madrid which will take his stay at the club up to 2005. His team-mate **Raul** has also committed himself to the club until that year, after extending his existing contract.

Gica Popescu has agreed a two-year extension to his contract with Galatasaray, committing himself to the club until 2003.



New job...Peter Taylor

In England, **Marcel Desailly** has signed a new four-year deal with Chelsea, who have also secured the services of **Graeme Le Saux** for another three years.

Leicester's **Matt Elliott** has signed a new four-year deal, taking him up to 2004.

Fiorentina goalkeeper **Francesco Toldo** and team-mate **Rui Costa** have ended speculation about their future by signing contract extensions. Toldo has committed himself to the club until 2005, Rui Costa until 2004.

OUT OF ACTION

Zambian international defender **Elijah Litana** will be sidelined for five months after shooting himself in the knee. Litana, who plays his club football with Al Hilal of Saudi Arabia, was cleaning a pistol at his home when the gun went off accidentally.

INTERNATIONAL INS AND OUTS

Three Portugal players – **Abel Xavier**, **Nuno Gomes** and **Paulo Bento** – were handed long suspensions by UEFA because of their excessive protests over France's late penalty award at the end of their Euro 2000 semi-final.

The bans, which range from six months to nine, mean that the trio will not be allowed to take part in European club competitions or internationals until next year.

Defender **Simon Colosimo** was recalled to the Australia squad for the series of friendlies against Paraguay 10 months after a challenge from Manchester United's Andy Cole left him with a serious knee injury.

Denmark defender **Jes Hogh** has decided to retire from international football because of a persistent ankle injury. The Chelsea player was a member of the Danish 22 at Euro 2000 but was not fit enough to play.

OBITUARIES

Shay Brennan, the former Republic of Ireland and Manchester United player, died suddenly at the age of 63 while playing golf in County Waterford. Brennan captained his country in five of his 19 internationals and was a member of the United side that won the 1968 European Cup.

German Under-21 international **Thomas Lechner** died in a motorcycle crash shortly after he had signed a new three-year contract with his club side, Kaiserslautern. The 21-year-old crashed into a tree as he attempted to overtake a car on his bike.

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Kaiser the chief!

Keir Radnedge in Zurich explains how Germany pulled off an unlikely World Cup victory

It's ours again...Franz Beckenbauer, who lifted the World Cup as bot

IT COULD be the ultimate international football quiz question: In which World Cup did Nelson Mandela, the King of Belgium and the Emir of Qatar finish on the losing side? The answer, of course, is 2006 – the World Cup that was a triumph not for a President, a King nor an Emir but a Kaiser.

How and why 'Kaiser' Franz Beckenbauer and Germany outwitted some of the world's richest and most persuasive men is a story of intrigue and double-dealing fit to rank with the best…or worst.

If nothing else emerges from the fiasco over the 2006 ballot then at least it should be recognition by FIFA president Sepp Blatter that 'rotation' of the finals among the continents is the only way to prevent a repetition of the shambolic events in and around the Dolder Grand Hotel and FIFA House on Thursday, July 6.

Germany emerged as surprise winners of hosting rights to the 2006 finals, beating South Africa 12-11 after New Zealand's Charlie Dempsey, president of the Oceania confederation, abstained in the decisive third round of voting in protest at the browbeating he was taking from all sides.

The Germans, hand in glove with UEFA, played a brilliant tactical game behind the scenes. Their campaign, spearheaded by Beckenbauer but directed by DFB president Egidius Braun with the fix-it assistance of marketing expert Fedor Radmann, pleased many FIFA insiders. After the political and logistical nightmare promised by the 2002 finals in Japan and South Korea, the world's greatest sporting event will return to 'safe' organisational hands.

The political shenanigans leading up to the dramatic unveiling of the Germans' triumph began on the previous Monday when Brazil dropped their bid in return for South African support when 2010 voting comes around. Negotiations between the four remaining delegations grew ever more intense over the next two days and it became clear that Morocco would fall first, with England – whose campaign had been finally undermined by the hooliganism of Charleroi – not far behind.

It was during that 48-hour period that the Germans extracted the vital Asian promises which proved far more important, in reality, than the Dempsey abstention. The Asians had been waiting for just such an opportunity to punish Blatter for refusing to award them an extra qualifying place in the 2002 finals.

Then there was the intervention of the German satirical magazine *Titanic*, whose gophers sneaked in to push a variety of envelopes under the hotel doors of at least 10 members of the FIFA executive including, crucially, Dempsey. The letters purported to offer inducements to vote for Germany.

Since one such 'bribe' was a sausage, the letters were quickly dismissed as the hoaxes they were. Dempsey, however, was still opening his mystery envelope at around six in the morning when he received a phone call from none other than Nelson Mandela. The former President of South Africa pleaded with Dempsey – known to be backing England – to switch to South Africa once England were eliminated.

Simultaneously, Blatter was trying to ambush several of the Asian delegates. At around 5.30am he rang Abdullah Al-Dabal of Saudi Arabia, Mohamed Bin Hammam of Qatar, and Worawi Makudi of Thailand, urging them to hand at least one if not two, of their votes to South Africa.

Blatter, now jittery, knew he was staring political defeat in the face. He recognised all too well that if Germany coralled all the Asian votes they would win, but prising just one away could be enough to edge South

HOW THEY VOTED

	1ST ROUND	2ND ROUND	3RD ROUND
Julio Grondona, Argentina	South Africa	South Africa	South Africa
David Will, Scotland	England	England	Germany
Lennart Johansson, Sweden	Germany	Germany	Germany
Issa Hayatou, Cameroon	South Africa	South Africa	South Africa
Antonio Matarrese, Italy	Germany	Germany	Germany
Chung Mong-joon, South Korea	Germany	Germany	Germany
Jack Warner, Trinidad & Tobago	England	South Africa	South Africa
Abdullah K. Al-Dabal, Saudi Arabia	Morocco	Germany	Germany
Slim Aloulou, Tunisia	Morocco	South Africa	South Africa
Michel D'Hooghe, Belgium	Germany	Germany	Germany
Isaac David Sasso Sasso, Costa Rica	England	South Africa	South Africa
Ricardo Teixeira, Brazil	South Africa	South Africa	South Africa
Per Ravn Omdal, Norway	Germany	Germany	Germany
Mohamed Bin Hammam, Qatar	Germany	Germany	Germany
Senes Erzik, Turkey	Germany	Germany	Germany
Charles Dempsey, New Zealand	England	England	ABSTAINED
Chuck Blazer, United States	England	South Africa	South Africa
Worawi Makudi, Thailand	Germany	Germany	Germany
Nicolas Leoz, Paraguay	South Africa	South Africa	South Africa
Ismail Bhamjee, Botswana	South Africa	South Africa	South Africa
Amadou Diakite, Mali	Morocco	South Africa	South Africa
Angel Maria Villar Llona, Spain	Germany	Germany	Germany
Joseph Mifsud, Malta	Germany	Germany	Germany
Sepp Blatter, FIFA president	South Africa	South Africa	South Africa
	GERMANY 10	**GERMANY 11**	**GERMANY 12**
	SOUTH AFRICA 6	**SOUTH AFRICA 11**	**SOUTH AFRICA 11**
	ENGLAND 5	**ENGLAND 2**	
	MOROCCO 3	*(England eliminated)*	
	(Morocco eliminated)		

layer and national team coach, celebrates after the vote

Africa ahead or at least leave the outcome at the mercy of Blatter's presidential casting vote – which was tantamount to the same thing.

Dempsey had, in the meantime, phoned his daughter, Jo King, who is also Oceania's general secretary, in the hope that she could persuade his own executive to free him from a congress mandate that he vote for South Africa once England had fallen. She tried…and failed.

That was when Dempsey took his controversial decision to make a formal statement of intent before the executive voted. To the amazement of fellow delegates, he said he had been placed under such intolerable pressure that he would vote for England for as long as he could and then abstain. The "pressure", according to Dempsey, comprised false accusations of accepting bribes and death threats.

'The Africans were incandescent. As one delegate put it: "We were stabbed in the back"'

He was already on his way home, via Singapore, while the rest of the executive were trooping off to the Messe centre for the official media announcement of Germany's victory.

Danny Jordaan and his South African delegation believed they had done just enough to win. However, the seeds of their defeat had been sown in the first round of voting. Three of the Asian representatives had voted for Germany and the other, Al-Dabal, for Morocco. When the latter were duly eliminated in the first round, the Saudi Arabian switched his vote to Germany too, completing the set. The Africans were incandescent. As Botswana's Ismail Bhamjee saw it: "We were stabbed in the back by our Asian friends."

Even then, the off-stage war still raged. Mandela, backed by his great prestige, phoned the King of Thailand, the Emir of Qatar and the King of Belgium. It made no difference. The Asians and seven of the eight UEFA-controlled votes stuck with Germany.

A hint at what was happening was revealed when FIFA told the media the results of the first two rounds of voting. The second round had seen England slip to two (David Will, the British home associations' vice-president, and Dempsey), with Germany and South Africa tying 11-11.

In the third round, Will switched to Germany and Dempsey abstained. Had Dempsey acted as his Oceania congress and executive (under some pressure from Blatter) had wanted, then he would have voted for South Africa, the 'score' would have been 12-12 and Blatter's casting vote would have taken the World Cup to Africa for the first time.

FIFA made great show of launching an investigation into subsequent allegations of sleaze while Dempsey's decision caused uproar in his native New Zealand. Sports Minister Trevor Mallard described him as an "international embarrassment".

Oddly enough, it may one day be recognised that the executive took the right decision, even if for the wrong subjective and personal reasons. One thing even the losers acknowledged, albeit grudgingly: Germany will be excellent hosts.

COUNTDOWN TO CHAOS

MONDAY (JULY 3)

Brazil withdraw their bid and agree to pledge all three South American votes for South Africa in return for South African support for the Brazilians' bid for 2010.

TUESDAY (JULY 4)

German federation 'fixers' set up the deal to snatch the Asian votes which had, until then, been expected to fall to South Africa.

WEDNESDAY (JULY 5)

English FA officials, seeing support slipping away, meet the CONCACAF trio from Trinidad & Tobago (Jack Warner), Costa Rica (Isaac Sasso Sasso) and the United States (Chuck Blazer) to try to keep them on board (along with Scotland's David Will and New Zealand's Charlie Dempsey). CONCACAF agree to back England on the first ballot but say they will stay loyal only if England secure at least six votes – otherwise the three votes would then switch to South Africa.

Under pressure...Dempsey

THURSDAY (JULY 6)

Executive members wake early to find letters (subsequently revealed as hoaxes) placed under their hotel room doors offering inducements to vote for Germany.

6am: Dempsey is almost overwhelmed by a string of pressurising phone calls from representatives of Germany, South Africa and FIFA president Sepp Blatter – who have all done their figures and perceive the 78-year-old New Zealander as, potentially, the vital voter. Dempsey decides to vote as promised for England and thereafter to abstain – despite instructions from his own Oceania congress to switch to South Africa.

6.15am: Dempsey phones home to Jo King, his daughter who is Oceania general secretary, and asks her – in vain – to obtain clearance for his personal voting strategy from his Oceania executive members.

6.30am: A shocked Blatter summons the Asian delegation to try to persuade them to switch back to South Africa.

9am: As the FIFA executive gathers, Dempsey formally announces his decision to vote for England and then to abstain.

10.04am: FIFA media director Keith Cooper reveals the results of the first two rounds of voting. The first round: England 5, Germany 10, Morocco 3, South Africa 6 (Morocco thus drop out). The second round: England 2, Germany 11, South Africa 11 (England drop out).

2pm: Dempsey leaves for the airport and an early flight home as Blatter formally announces Germany's 12-11 success in the third round of voting.

FRIDAY (JULY 7)

FIFA media personnel reveal – and then deny – that Dempsey believed he had received death threats. Bitter South African officials threaten to go to court to try to have the vote overturned. Dempsey decides to quit as president of the Oceania confederation.

Winning team...Beckenbauer and the victorious Germans are greeted by Blatter (left)

Now for the easy part...

MEMORIES of Germany's dire Euro 2000 campaign have been virtually washed away by the acquisition of the 2006 World Cup finals, a boom in Bundesliga season ticket sales and the appointment of new brooms Rudi Voller and Christoph Daum to run the national team.

Winning World Cup hosting rights was greeted with delight and not a little surprise. Public and political opinion had been lukewarm down the years but Franz Beckenbauer's magic touch has been hailed as having made the difference.

In fact, the behind-the-scenes scheming of veteran DFB president Egidius Braun was more significant as he worked his persuasive politics within the corridors of power at both UEFA and then FIFA.

Beckenbauer, public spearhead of the bid and voted into the high-status role of a DFB vice-president to do the job, promised an "excellent" World Cup after Germany pipped South Africa 12 votes to 11 in the third round of voting by the FIFA executive.

He added: "I would like to thank all 24 members of the executive committee, who have become friends. We have enjoyed their hospitality and we would like to give this back to them during the tournament. They can rest assured that Germany in 2006 will be an excellent host.

"I am sorry for all three of those countries who did not win because I know, having been a sportsman, what it is like to lose and what it is like to win. We hope that our friendships with them will remain."

The 'Kaiser' was forgiving over remarks by England 'ambassador' Tony Banks, who had told UEFA that Germany could not gain enough votes outside Europe to carry the vote. Beckenbauer said: "Of course Banks was disappointed when he heard the results of the report of the inspection team experts [which placed Germany and South Africa above England]. I thought he was wrong to say that Germany did not stand a chance, although I could understand his disappointment."

The next problem for the Germans is to sort out who heads up the domestic organising committee and how to help direct redevelopment funds where they are needed most. Already one row has exploded between Berlin, national capital, and Munich, football capital, over who gets the Final and at what price.

'Already a row has exploded between Berlin and Munich over who gets the Final'

The DFB's bid document envisaged a rebuilt Olympic stadium in Berlin hosting the Final to the delight of city mayor Eberhard Diepgen and the fury of Munich's Christian Ude, a member of Chancellor Gerhard Schroder's governing Social Democrat party. Munich hosted the Final when (West) Germany were last the hosts in 1974.

Another snag has arisen over Beckenbauer's future role in the preparations for 2006. The Bayern Munich president apparently wants significant influence in who does what and where – to the irritation of fellow members of the DFB.

Beckenbauer has even threatened to quit the DFB if he does not get his way. He said: "I only accepted the post to help me travel round the world. I don't need that title any more. In any case, I'm a club man, not an association man. An association has servants who work as managers but lack vision."

General secretary Horst R Schmidt remains confident that difficulties can be ironed out and that Beckenbauer will head up a five or six-man committee including former marketing 'fix-it' Fedor Radmann.

One dent in the German victory was the role of the satirical magazine *Titanic* which sent hoax faxes purporting to offer bribes on the DFB's behalf to members of FIFA's executive. FIFA said in a statement: "A German satirical magazine has admitted responsibility...the letter had generally been dismissed by the members as not genuine."

The World Cup success helped prompt a boom in season ticket sales ahead of the new Bundesliga season. Borussia Dortmund headed the table with more than 40,000 sold, followed by Kaiserslautern (30,000) and champions Bayern (20,000).

Keir Radnedge

Keir Radnedge

COMMENTARY

Johansson gains his revenge

GERMANY'S victory in the 2006 World Cup race was not so much a case of Franz Beckenbauer's brilliance or Charlie Dempsey's disaster or even Alec McGivan's misery but Lennart Johansson's revenge.

Two years ago Johansson was comprehensively outmanoeuvred by Sepp Blatter in the FIFA presidential race. Now the score is 1-1 and, unless Blatter gets his act together quickly, he will struggle in extra time.

Much of the fall-out from the bid vote has centred on Dempsey's abstention. But it wasn't Dempsey who blew South Africa out of the water. It was the four-vote Asian bloc vote, which swung decisively and unanimously for Germany.

That may appear odd, given the concern Africa and Asia usually share over European power within FIFA. But the Asians were repaying a debt to UEFA for maintaining the offer of a play-off for a place in the 2002 World Cup finals. They were also punishing Blatter, personally, for failing to hand them a certain extra place in Japan/Korea.

On top of that, South Korea's Chung Mong-joon owed UEFA a favour for the European confederation's backing to force the 2002 co-hosting decision on Joao Havelange four years ago.

Nevertheless, it was Dempsey who caught the fall-out. He said he had been accused of accepting bribes and, thus, preferred not to vote either way once his initial preference for England was out of court. I can understand that. What I cannot understand is why Dempsey appeared not to have bargained his vote more effectively.

The real World Cup scandal is that, with 32 nations going to the finals, Oceania does not have even ONE guaranteed place.

That's a nonsense when you hear the Blatters and Johanssons talking about the World Cup's role in worldwide promotion of the game.

Surely Dempsey's vote should have gone to whoever promised to push Oceania into the finals for 2006. UEFA and Germany should certainly reward him with at least that 'posthumous' prize now that he has been forced to quit.

Winner...UEFA's Johansson (right)

Keeping it in the family

SEPP BLATTER likes to talk about "the football family". It's a phrase redolent with double meaning for Charlie Dempsey, the 78-year-old New Zealander with the Scottish accent who was hero or villain – depending on whether you were pro-Germany or pro-South Africa – in the 2006 scandal.

While Dempsey was half a world away from his constituency in the southern Pacific, fighting off all those blandishments, sweeteners and threats, he was confident he had left 'the shop' in good hands. After all, the day-to-day running of the Oceania confederation is handled by secretary Jo King – who happens to be Dempsey's daughter.

Dempsey is proud of her achievement in rising higher up football's international political ladder than any other woman. He once told me: "She is a highly competent administrator with all the necessary experience and qualifications. Also, she has been steeped in football since she was a girl. But she is in the job on merit."

Former FIFA president Joao Havelange says much the same about his son-in-law Ricardo Teixeira. But it is also no secret that Havelange looks after his own in ruthless fashion.

In due course Teixeira rose to join the ruling inner cabal of the South American confederation and thence, as its delegate, on to the FIFA executive committee, where he figured among further controversy this past month.

Brazil withdrew from the 2006 bidding race, promising not only their vote but those of Argentina and Paraguay to South Africa in exchange for South African support for their own candidacy in 2010.

Havelange has claimed responsibility for proposing and brokering the deal. But how could he when he holds no elected position within FIFA or within the Brazilian and South American confederations? Easy, when you have a son-in-law sitting round all three tables.

Any football director with aspirations to enter the five-star, bejewelled tie-pin world of the FIFA executive needs to develop political sensitivity, to make friends in the right places, to watch out for his back and to take advantage of whatever breaks may come his way.

Jack Warner, the former history lecturer from Trinidad who heads the Central and North American confederation, is a perfect example of a man who capitalised on fortunate timing.

When Warner was voted in a decade ago CONCACAF was a sleepy little confederation with an office in Panama City which nobody ever went near. But Warner realised the potential unleashed by FIFA's award to the USA of the 1994 World Cup.

American companies were jumping out of the woodwork to compete for sponsorships. Warner harnessed that financial power and, simultaneously, eased himself into Havelange's good books with a string of flattering events and awards.

The result is that, though Havelange has long gone, CONCACAF now has three offices, including its HQ on New York's fashionable Fifth Avenue.

Sporting power is one *raison d'etre* for entry into this privileged world. A comfortable life surrounded by sycophants and cushioned by five-star hotels and first-class air fares – all paid for by FIFA – is another. Yet another is the use of football as an alternative route to political power.

Chung Mong-joon from South Korea is probably the richest man on the FIFA executive. He is one of the six sons of the scion of the massive Hyundai corporation. His share of the family business includes the car company and one of the world's busiest shipbuilding yards.

Yet that is not enough. Chung has political ambitions that will be realised only if he can pull football's levers of power to bring about a rapprochement between North and South Korea.

That was the hidden agenda behind South Korea's bid to gain a co-hosting chunk of the next World Cup. Now, it seems, at least a couple of matches in the 2002 finals will be staged in North Korea.

Chung is getting there.

Where there's a Will...

NO GREATER contrast to his fellow FIFA executive members could exist than Aberdeen lawyer David Will, the British home nations' FIFA vice-president.

It was a blunder of enormous proportions when former FA chief Keith Wiseman tried to oust Will from his FIFA seat. Nobody would have blamed Will if he had given England's 2006 bid short shrift after that. But he did not. He stood his ground, voting first for England then, as a good European, for Germany.

One thing is for sure: England dare not ever try that trick again.

Facing up to failure

After Germany's surprise victory came the soul-searching and accusations

Defeated...bid boss Danny Jordaan (centre) waits for the official announcement

SOUTH AFRICA

All pain for no gain

AFTER the initial disappointment has come anger as African hopes of supping meaningfully at the table of international sport are set back at least another decade.

The decision to give Germany the 2006 World Cup finals was not altogether unexpected; they presented a formidable counter to the hopes of the African continent to host the tournament for the first time.

But as details have unfolded as to the way in which South Africa lost out, so there has been an outpouring of frustration over what is seen as the 'First World' monopoly of the event.

This has not only been restricted to South Africa but throughout Africa, where newspaper editorials, reader's letters and radio talk shows have accused FIFA's executive committee of racism.

The acrimony is likely to spill over to the next FIFA Congress, to be held in Zurich in early August, where a renewed effort to rid the organisation's key structures of European dominance is to be launched.

Whether that can be achieved, however, remains something of a long shot. South African officials spent much of their time in the wake of their controversial loss running through the rules and regulations to figure out the possibility of a legal challenge. They found no real recourse and were also warned off by FIFA, who fired off a quick letter to Johannesburg saying that the vote was binding under Swiss law.

What is hoped now is that the principle of rotating the hosting of the World Cup among the confederations can be entrenched.

The Confederation of African Football has quickly tabled this issue for discussion within FIFA. They will now take the lead in a campaign where previously they had stayed silent, hamstrung by having two African candidates in the 2006 bidding process and being unwilling to make a choice between them.

However, the appetite for another bid for 2010 in South Africa is weak among the football fraternity. Both the government and media in the country have tried to get some momentum going but football officials seem weary and shell-shocked after the drama and emotional drain of the 2006 campaign.

Sports minister Ngconde Balfour has already pledged around £1.5million towards a new bid for 2010, and a massive petition campaign is being run by a newspaper group, trying to flood FIFA with signatures demanding an African host of the 2010 event.

The South African Football Association says it intends to wait until after the FIFA Congress before discussing the matter again. It seems they will only be prepared to bid again if the playing field is set out to their liking.

Mark Gleeson

BRAZIL

Wheeling and dealing backfires

"SOUTH AFRICA will win, probably in the first round." So said CBF president Ricardo Teixeira as he announced the withdrawal of the Brazilian bid for the 2006 World Cup. Three days later, his brash prediction blew up in his face.

Teixeira had made a credible attempt to portray Brazil's withdrawal, 72 hours before the vote, as a political masterstroke rather than what it really was, an embarrassment for his country. According to Teixeira, the move was part of a cunning strategy that would leave Brazil as strong favourites to win in 2010.

"We will work for our votes to go to South Africa and they have promised to do everything to help us in 2010," he said. Teixeira added that

ENGLAND

Paying the price

ENGLAND'S 2006 bid was not the foregone flop it has been painted by what used to be called Fleet Street. One more first-round vote – edging them from five to six – could have kept the CONCACAF trio on board and called in other allies.

But it was always an uphill struggle once Brazil pulled out in favour of South Africa.

The Football Association's bid has been described variously as a "waste of money", as "inept", as "politically naive", and as "doomed from the start." It was none of those things. It was an uphill battle which rolled back down the political mountain.

But at least the FA tried, putting in some serious effort.

There would have been even more ferocious criticism if Germany had won the rights to 2006 and England had not entered the process at all.

Then it would have been open season on the FA for a lack of ambition.

As the dust settles, a number of factors have become clearer. The first was the manner in which forces within UEFA – for reasons that will one day emerge – used the lie of the so-called handshake to undermine English ambition from the start.

The truth was that England had been out there bidding for a World Cup at least two years before Germany began. England had launched a campaign in pursuit of 1998 and publicised it at the FA Cup Finals at the start of the decade. Euro 96 was England's pay-off for giving France a clear run at 1998.

UEFA knew that. The DFB knew that. To

there was no question of other South American countries organising their own 2010 bid.

Oozing confidence, the CBF president gave journalists a detailed breakdown on how the voting would go in Zurich. The South Africans, he said, would receive all three votes from South American delegates, all three from CONCACAF, all four African votes and three of the four Asian votes. Teixeira predicted that Germany would get seven or eight votes and England two – one from Europe and one from Oceania.

At this stage, the CBF chief was clearly pleased with himself. He called a press conference early on Monday morning to explain the deal with the Africans and even tried to joke with journalists, possibly for the first time in his 10-year reign as CBF president, when he apologised for getting them out of bed.

His day was complete when he humiliated a reporter who asked him a question on a different subject. The unfortunate hack began his question with "I know this conference is about the World Cup but..." Teixeira let him waffle on for a good minute and then replied: "You put it very well. This conference is about 2006. Next question." Like his father-in-law, Joao Havelange, Teixeira has always got a kick out of publicly humiliating reporters.

Less than 72 hours later, however, the laughs were on 'Tricky Dicky' as his forecasts went up in flames. After emerging from the vote – Teixeira is one of South America's three representatives on FIFA's executive – he left in a huff, refusing to talk to the *Folha de Sao Paulo*, the only Brazilian newspaper that attempted to locate him. "I don't talk to the *Folha*," he grouched.

Teixeira's loss of face apart, Germany's win almost certainly meant that Africa would try again in 2010, in which case Brazil could wave goodbye to their votes for its own bid. A few days later, Chile added insult to injury when they announced they were contemplating a joint bid with Argentina.

Big drawback...Ricardo Teixeira (left)

The only thing Teixeira really achieved with his withdrawal was to save Brazil from the embarrassment of finishing last in the vote. His organisation had made a pig's ear of a bid which, if it had been handled with any competence, should have been among the front-runners.

Brazil, after all, was by far the most exotic and most romantic of the five bids. Its proposed venues (the sprawling metropoli of Sao Paulo and Belo Horizonte apart) were mainly tropical, beach-front cities such as Rio de Janeiro, Maceio, Salvador, Joao Pessoa and Fortaleza – infinitely more enticing than, say, Manchester, Birmingham and Dortmund, and far safer than crime-ravaged South Africa.

Although Brazilian domestic football is in a complete mess, the country has a reasonable track record in organising major events. It has a multitude of large stadia, which could easily be refurbished, a decent internal air service to shuttle around teams and officials, plenty of good hotels, and history on its side – after all, the World Cup has not come to South America since 1978.

It should be made absolutely clear that the biggest drawback to Brazil's bid, as Pele repeatedly pointed out, was not poverty, economics or decaying infrastructure but simply the people who were organising it, i.e. Teixeira and his cronies in the CBF.

"Their intention is to get some money but not do a great deal of work for it," Pele said at one stage. "If we had a project that was transparent and everything was being done in the open, then that would be okay. But we don't have any of this."

He was joined by Jose Trajano, columnist in the daily sports paper *Lance*. "What happened to the money spent on the false Brazilian candidature. Whose pocket did it end up in?" he asked.

Pele's realism led to him being criticised by some for being unpatriotic, a quite amazing allegation given everything he has done for his country.

Brian Homewood

king out...Tony Banks, Alec McGivan and Bobby Charlton prepare for the inevitable

pretend that England came from nowhere with a World Cup bid was preposterous.

Unfortunately it was gleefully picked up by various people within the British game and London-based media who had their own axes to grind with the Football Association.

A second mistake by the English bid team was to maintain the campaign for so long. South Korea and now Germany have shown that what matters most is the last four months not the previous four years.

Mistake No 3 was a lack of vision. England focused far too heavily on the here and now. Germany and South Africa paid more attention to a vision for 2006 – far more important. Also, it gave the Germans and South Africans the chance to show they would have far greater spectator capacity in their stadia than England's.

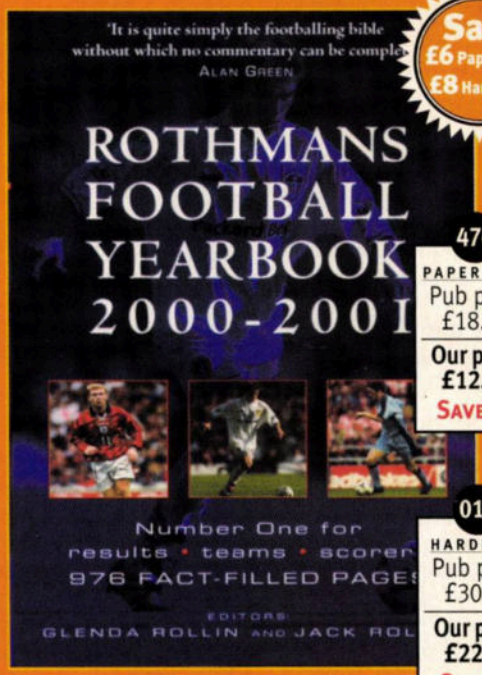
Fourthly, the FA team fell badly into the trap of allowing themselves to be provoked into a public attack of the jitters over the biased manner in which the inspection report was leaked.

That led, in turn, to envoy Tony Banks's injudiciously public whinge to UEFA about German voting prospects. Another own goal.

Fifthly, the hooligans of Euro 2000, given free rein by government. Not decisive in themselves, they offered a convenient excuse for wavering allies to jump ship.

Keir Radnedge

Keeps you going longer than the Arsenal back four.



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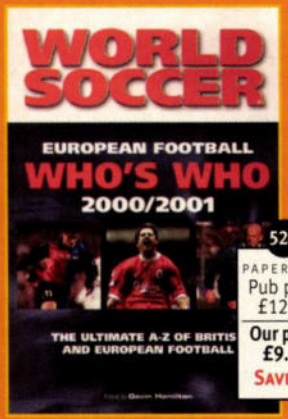

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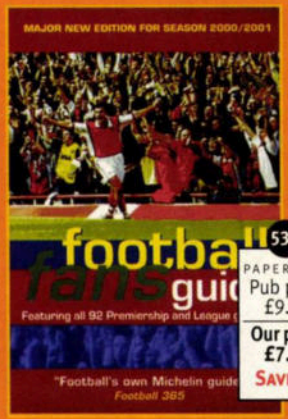

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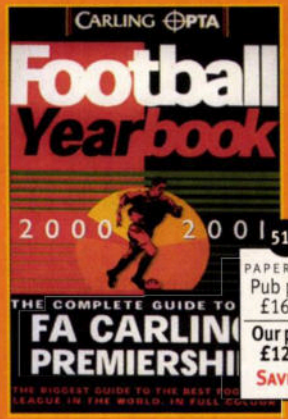

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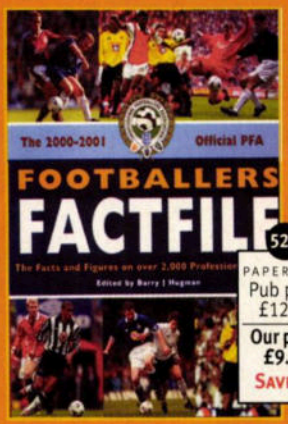

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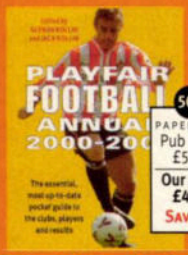

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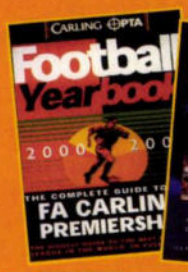

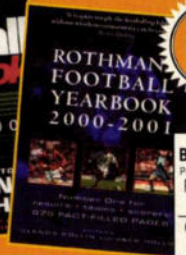

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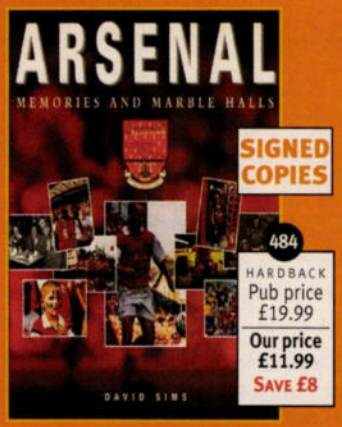

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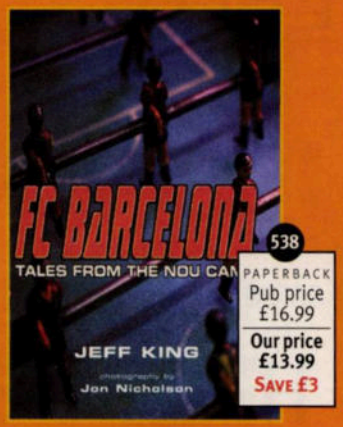

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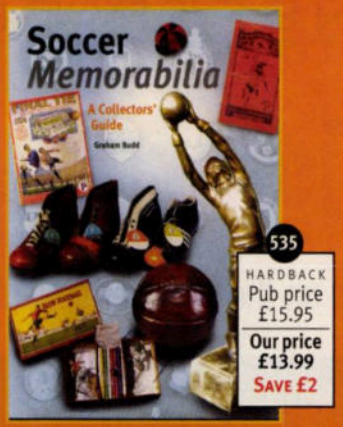

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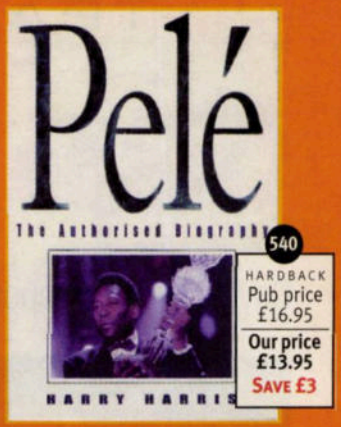

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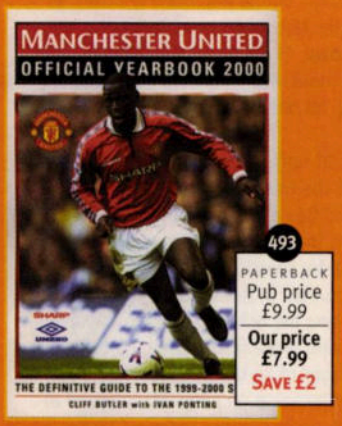

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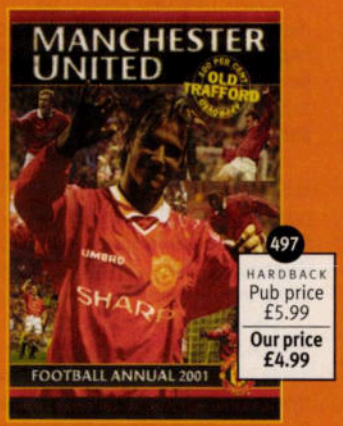

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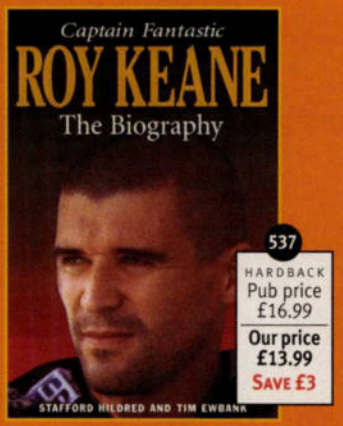

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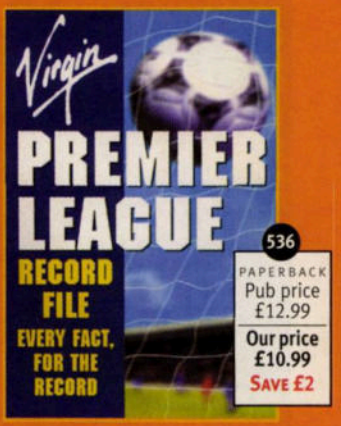

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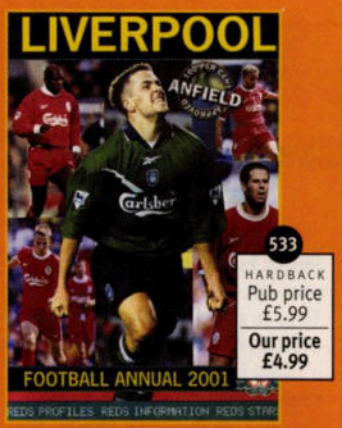

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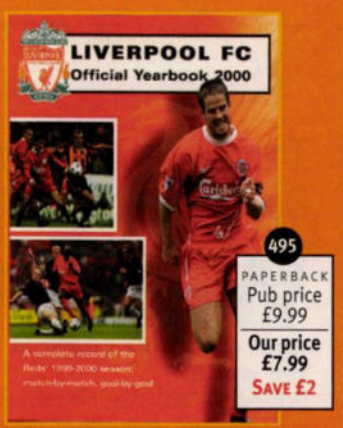

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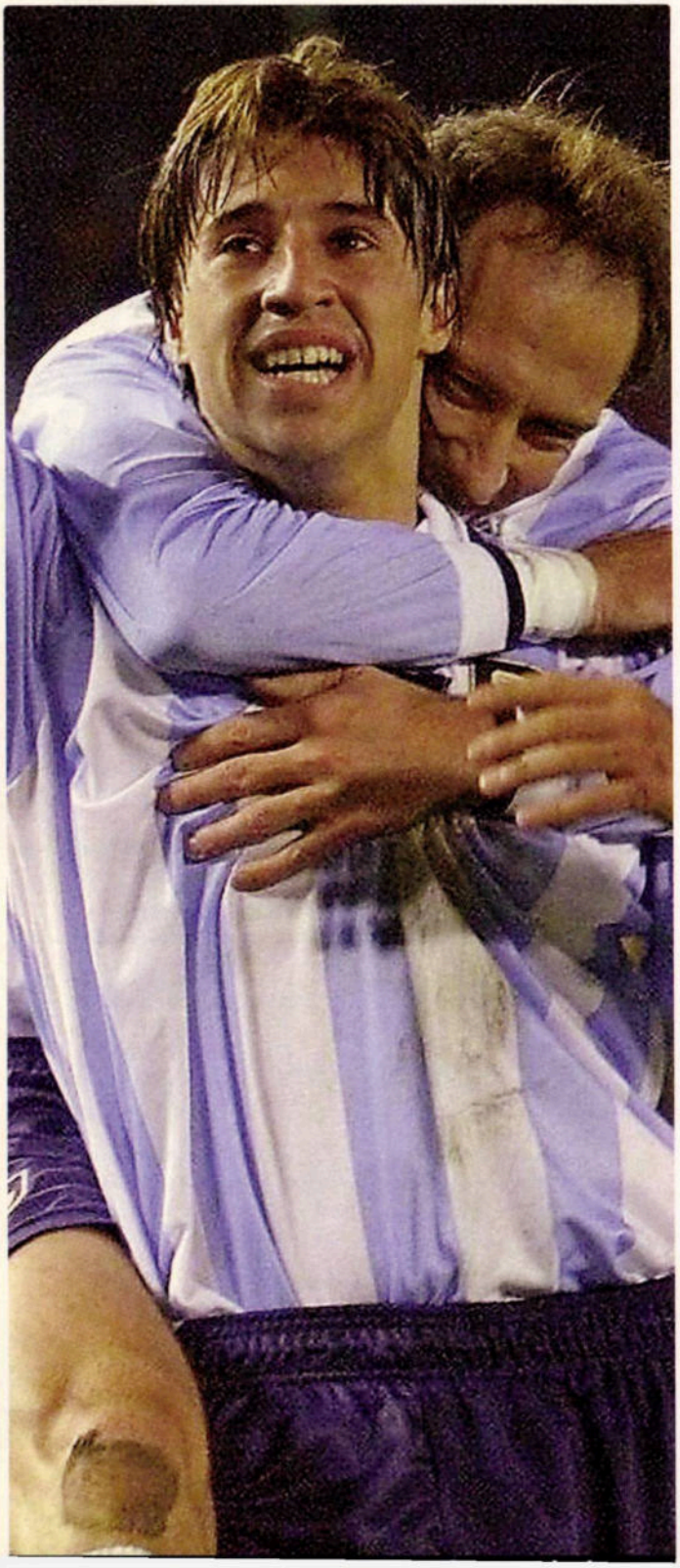
WSOCCER AUG

Crespo joins the record breakers

Gavin Hamilton reports on the summer spending spree



HERNAN CRESPO'S record-breaking transfer to Lazio was the major event so far in a long, drawn-out summer transfer market. It confirmed the ambitions of Lazio's owner Sergio Cragnotti (see page 48), and Italy's position as the world's richest League.

Lazio, the Italian champions, paid Parma £12million, plus Argentinian midfielder Matias Almeyda (valued at £15m) and Portuguese wideman Sergio Conceicao (valued at £10m). The deal therefore valued Crespo at £37m, some £6m more than Christian Vieri when he moved from Lazio to Inter last summer.

The transfer was protracted to say the least. Lazio had originally offered the Chilean Marcelo Salas in part-exchange, but he had been reluctant to move, hoping instead for a switch to Inter. Not that Sergio Conceicao was happy with his makeweight role in the deal. "I am disappointed with Lazio," he said. "To be honest, I deserved a bit more respect after all that I have given to this team. I still don't know anything, no one warned me I could be sold and I'll be sorry to leave Rome."

With the Italian League not kicking off until October 1, there was still time for many more twists and turns on the transfer trail, especially as the presidential elections at Real Madrid and Barcelona had delayed events in Spain. When *World Soccer* went to press, Real's new president, Florentino Perez, was claiming that Luis Figo would be switching to the Bernabeu in a £40m transfer that would put the Crespo deal in the shade.

Crespo and Almeyda were by no means the only Argentinians involved in high-profile deals. Gabriel Batistuta's £22m move from Fiorentina to Roma made him the fourth most expensive player of all time, as well as, reportedly, the best paid in the world. Batistuta (interviewed on page 22) is joined at Roma by young defender Walter Samuel, while Claudio Lopez's £14m move to Lazio from Valencia was concluded months ago.

Other major signings, including Boudewijn Zenden and Angelo Peruzzi, made Lazio by far the biggest spenders of the summer so far. Juventus splashed out £15m on David Trezeguet (see page 26) from Monaco, who used the money from his sale to buy Shabani Nonda for £13.5m, a French record.

'The money doesn't matter'

The world's most expensive player talks to Dominique Antognoni

WORLD SOCCER: So, Hernan, how does it feel to be the most expensive player in the world?

HERNAN CRESPO: Well, life's not as quiet as before, what with all these interviews I have to do! But joking apart, I suppose I feel proud, not just for myself but for my folks too. When I found out the price-tag [Parma president] Tanzi had put on me, I was thinking mainly of my family – and the fact that their son is the most expensive will thrill them. I thought how delighted my father – who has just recovered from an illness – will feel when he hears that his son is so

Does having such a price put on you make you feel a greater sense of obligation?

If I start by scoring two goals straight away, everyone will say: 'He was worth all that money.' But if I start by not scoring at all they'll say exactly the opposite. I'm already used to such behaviour – it's all part of the game, though I don't think that it's fair. You can be tired or have bad spells even if you cost nothing at all. Did you see the Austrian Grand Prix today? Schumacher went out on the first bend. These things happen – the fact that he is probably the world's best-paid driver could not have

Why have you decided to go to Lazio?
I have a motto: 'Work hard in order to improve.' It may sound banal, but every day I work, I train and I focus all my energy on the job. I'm coming to a team that has just won the *scudetto* so it's a step forward.

Months ago, Buffon, Cannavaro and Thuram spoke of there being a pact between the four of you. What did they mean?
To stay at Parma for one more year and to try to win the *scudetto*.

So you broke the pact?
I would have been happy to stay but I had never before seen such persistence as [Lazio owner] Cragnotti showed with regard to buying me. He wore Tanzi down.

And so you are leaving Parma after four years. Any regrets?
With the way the players performed, I think they deserved to win the *scudetto* and I'm truly sad that I wasn't able to help them bring the championship to the Tardini [stadium].

What will you miss most?
The great kindness of the people of Parma, and the dignity and good manners of the Tanzi family.

I'm talking with my tongue in my cheek here, but how much of the 110 *miliardi* [£37million transfer value] was due to your first coach at Parma, Carlo Ancelotti, and how much to your second, Alberto Malesani?
When can we talk about something other than money?

Well, it's not every day one gets to meet the world's most expensive player.
All right, let's think…I was two years with Carlo, and two with Malesani, so about half and half, I'd say!

You're very good with diplomatic answers.
But I must add that if it hadn't been for Carlo, Malesani wouldn't have got anything.

If Ancelotti thought so highly of you, why didn't he take you to Juve?
If he had, then what would he have done with Inzaghi? If he hadn't already got Pippo, well, who knows what might have happened.

You're young, there's time.
This is true. But don't go writing that Hernan Crespo wants to go to Juve.

OK, two more questions about money and then we'll move on. You are now valued at 20 times what you were worth four years ago when you first arrived at Parma. What do you make of that?
[Laughing heartily] I suppose it means that when I'm 29, the age at which I am supposed to be at my peak, I'll be worth 2,000 *miliardi*! Seriously though, the prices that are being paid today don't bear comparison with how things used to be. Fees keep on going up and football is changing very fast, what with sponsorship, television rights, the stock market etc. In the past four years, so much has changed in football.

Is a player's salary the main factor in changing clubs?
With regard to my salary, it wasn't central to my decision to say 'yes' to Lazio. They are a strong side. I was in the crowd to watch that famous Lazio-Milan 4-4 match, which was thrilling, absolutely magnificent. Then I was at the San Siro to watch the Coppa Italia Final two months ago, when Inter and Lazio drew 0-0 and I saw that 10,000 fans had travelled up from Rome. That's the sort of thing that can really urge you on to win. Then add the fact that they are the Italian champions, that they have a fantastic line-up, and how could I not have come to Lazio?

And then there's Veron, playing behind the strikers as he always has with Lazio.
It's fantastic – I really can't wait.

Was Veron the deciding factor for your decision to come to Rome?
I think it was an important matter for Cragnotti. He wanted to get us playing together. It's obvious that I was going to come to play with Seba – he's a genius.

You two go back a long way.
We got to know each other in 1996 at the Atlanta Olympics. Before that, we'd always been opponents – I was with River Plate and he was with Estudiantes, and then Boca Juniors. A few weeks after the Olympics, we both found ourselves in Italy – he was on his own at Sampdoria and I was in the same situation at Parma. We used to encourage each other if we were feeling low. It was the first time we had left our home country, and we had left behind the way of life that we knew so well. So that's how our friendship started.

Do you remember the whistles you used to have to put up with at Parma in that first year there?
Yes, I remember them in the second year too, at least in the early part. But they are basically decent people, the Parma fans. And I did miss a number of goals…

What are your happiest memories from Parma?
Qualifying for the Champions League in the first year I was there. And the goal in the 90th minute against Juve. The whole Tardini seemed to shake.

Finally, how do you regard yourself as a player now?
It may sound strange that although I feel I have made many changes for the good in my short career, I don't consider myself a truly great player. Batistuta has extraordinary power, Zamorano has formidable determination, Ronaldo has amazing speed – but can you honestly say that I have any of these qualities? These things cannot be easily achieved; in fact, some of them are simply innate. But I can work very hard, every day – I always have done, it's my way of life.

THE SUMMER'S BIG TRANSFERS

Hernan Crespo	Parma to Lazio	£37m
Gabriel Batistuta	Fiorentina to Roma	£22m
Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink	Atletico Madrid to Chelsea	£15m
David Trezeguet	Monaco to Juventus	£15m
Claudio Lopez	Valencia to Lazio	£14m
Shabani Nonda	Rennes to Monaco	£13.5m
Walter Samuel	Boca Juniors to Roma	£13m

TOP 10 TRANSFERS OF ALL TIME

Hernan Crespo	Parma to Lazio	£37m
Christian Vieri	Lazio to Inter	£31m
Nicolas Anelka	Arsenal to Real Madrid	£22.5m
Gabriel Batistuta	Fiorentina to Roma	£22m
Denilson	Sao Paulo to Betis	£21.5m
Marcio Amoroso	Udinese to Parma	£21m
Juan Veron	Parma to Lazio	£20m
Christian Vieri	Atletico Madrid to Lazio	£19m
Ronaldo	Barcelona to Inter	£19m
Andrii Shevchenko	Kyiv Dynamo to Milan	£16m

TRANSFER TRAIL STARTS ON PAGE 23

Back in the Premiership...Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink

Rome is where the heart is

Gabriel Batistuta tells Dominique Antognoni about his switch to Roma

Ciao, Batigol...Batistuta is greeted by a fan after joining Roma for £22m

WORLD SOCCER: You could have gone to a number of clubs. Why did you choose Roma?
GABRIEL BATISTUTA: Because I feel positive about their ambitions. I've seen that [Roma president] Sensi is very determined to win, after having watched Lazio take the *scudetto*. Roma have treated me like a true champion – as though I'm the greatest player they've ever bought, whereas other sides have only ever treated me like a good buy. There's a world of difference. I know that other great players are going to come to Roma, too, which means we'll be able to build a brilliant team.

How do you answer people who say that paying 70 billion lire [£22m] for a player who's pushing 32 is a bit over the top?
I scored 23 goals in the last championship, and then there were those goals at Wembley, and the one I scored against Manchester United. Everyone wants to get to that level, but only a very few achieve it. And I'd like to point out that as far as my performances in Italy are concerned, I have scored more than many players who are in their twenties, who nevertheless cost the same amount without having proved themselves to such an extent. Roma want to win things very quickly now, and if a manager picks younger players, he's going to have to wait a while to get the results.

And your annual salary's going to be 12 billion lire [£4m]...
That type of money just reflects the value that the club places on a player. Roma were the club who proved they had the greatest enthusiasm for me.

What about Inter?
Inter also offered me good terms. Lazio just treated me like one more player – so, no thanks.

Lazio president Sergio Cragnotti has said that the investment in you would have been too great.
I think he said that only because he didn't succeed in signing me!

Your new team-mate, Montella, says the No 9 shirt is his...
We'll be discussing that in the changing-room to get it all properly sorted out. I hate changing things like that [Batistuta wore No 9 for Fiorentina].

How did you feel on the day you were introduced to the Roma fans?
It was fantastic. I told the fans that I'll repay them on the pitch, and that I'll put my heart and soul into my football. I really do appreciate the Roman will to win.

They don't always succeed though...
So far this year they've had a very good team – very different from their previous line-up – and they had some brave players. I don't know why they slackened off towards the end of the season. Totti was fantastic in creating assists, so that's going to be a wonderful situation for me to be in.

Do you have a goalscoring target for next season?
It's always hard to predict, but let's say 17 – that's one every other game. That's a good average.

Have you reconciled yourself to not being in the Champions League?
I've very much wanted to play in the Champions League again after playing in it with Fiorentina. But what I want more than that is to become a champion in the Italian League. That's why I said no to Manchester United. I may well go to play in England at a future date, though.

Why did you leave Fiorentina?
They began to lose enthusiasm. I felt increasingly sure that I wasn't going to win anything with them. I think I was right to do what I did, and I'm happy with the decision.

You have often said that one thing that disappoints you about Fiorentina is the constant changing of direction – that no plan ever really gets off the ground.
That's right. I'll give you an example. [General manager] Antognoni is the only person with the ability to lead the team, and every year they promise that he can become the man to make the decisions. It never happens and this really annoys me. At Fiorentina there never really has been any strategy. Just when things look as though they're going well, they'd change tack. I couldn't carry on like that.

But how on earth did the club get into such a situation?
I know, but I won't say.

How did you get on with [Fiorentina president] Cecchi Gori?
We got on well, but it's true to say we had different ideas on how the game should be played.

You left Fiorentina after nine years. How did that feel?
The fans have always wished me well, and my home remains in Florence. But it's one thing to live there and another to work there. I'm still a big fan of the club I played for for all those years.

Are you still thinking of ending your playing career in Argentina?
Well, the idea is always there, but it will all depend on what physical condition I'm in, and whether I'll still have something to offer to Argentine football.

		FROM	TO
Dele ADEBOLA	F	Birmingham City	Las Palmas
ADRIANO	M	Atletico Paranaense	Marseille
Rabiu AFOLABI	D	Standard Liege	Napoli
Ade AKINBIYI	F	Wolves	Leicester
Mohamed Salem AL-ENAZI	F	Al Rayyan	Yuzgitspor
Niclas ALEXANDERSSON	M	Sheffield Wednesday	Everton
Matias ALMEYDA	M	Lazio	Parma
Diego ALONSO	F	Gimnasia LP	Valencia
Gabriel ALVEZ	F	Nacional (Uru)	Olympiakos
AMARAL	M	Vasco da Gama	Fiorentina
Guillermo AMOR	M	Fiorentina	Villarreal
Nicola AMORUSO	F	Perugia	Napoli
Kennet ANDERSSON	F	Bologna	Fenerbahce
ANDRE	M	Salgueiros	FC Porto
Martin ANDRESEN	M	Wimbledon	Molde (loan)
Stephen APPIAH	M	Udinese	Parma
Andre ARENDSE	G	Oxford United	Santos (SAf)
ARIF Erdem	F	Galatasaray	Real Sociedad
Ole-Martin ARST	F	Gent	Standard Liege
Peter ATHERTON	D	Sheffield Wed	Bradford
Phil BABB	D	Liverpool	Sporting Lisbon
Markus BABBEL	D	Bayern Munich	Liverpool
Walid BADIR	D	Wimbledon	Maccabi Haifa
Khaled BADRA	D	Esperance	Denizlispor
Marco BALLOTTA	G	Lazio	Internazionale
Miroslav BARANEK	M	Sparta Prague	Koln
Sergej BARBAREZ	M	Borussia Dortmund	Hamburg
Jose Javier BARKERO	M	Real Sociedad	Toulouse (loan)
Nick BARMBY	F	Everton	Liverpool
Gustavo BARTELT	F	Roma	Rayo Vallecano (loan)
Fabien BARTHEZ	G	Monaco	Manchester United
Christian BASSEDAS	M	Velez Sarsfield	Newcastle
Gabriel BATISTUTA	F	Fiorentina	Roma
Jean-Sebastien BAX	M	AS Marsouin	Santos (SAf)
Mikkel BECK	F	Derby	Lille
Markus BEIERLE	F	Duisburg	1860 Munich
Stefan BEINLICH	M	Bayer Leverkusen	Hertha Berlin
Radek BEJBL	M	Atletico Madrid	Lens
Eddy BEMBUANA-KEVE	F	Lommel	La Louviere
Trevor BENJAMIN	F	Cambridge United	Leicester
Dimitar BERBATOV	F	CSKA Sofia	Bayer Leverkusen
Andre BERGDOLMO	D	Rosenborg	Ajax
Andre BIANCARELLI	G	Metz	Monaco
Igor BISCAN	D	Dinamo Zagreb	Fenerbahce
Torgeir BJARMANN	D	Lillestrom	Linz ASK
Laszlo BODNAR	D	Debrecen	Kyiv Dynamo
Jorg BOHME	M	Arminia Bielefeld	Schalke
Elvir BOLIC	F	Fenerbahce	Rayo Vallecano
Victor BONILLA	F	Real Sociedad	Toulouse
Riadh BOUAZIZI	M	Etoile Sahel	Bursaspor
Jean-Alain BOUMSONG	D	Le Havre	Auxerre
Bjorn Otto BRAGSTAD	D	Rosenborg	Derby
Cristian BROCCHI	M	Verona	Internazionale
BRUNO BASTO	D	Benfica	Bordeaux
Nino BULE	F	Zagreb	Gamba Osaka
Yves BURLINCKX	F	Molenbeek	La Louviere
Dario CABROL	M	Union Santa Fe	Toulouse
Pablo Ignacio CALANDRIA	F	Marseille	Lens (loan)
Zoumana CAMARA	D	Bastia	Marseille
Joan CAPDEVILLA	D	Atletico Madrid	La Coruna
David CARABOTT	F	Hibernians	Valletta
Fabian CARINI	G	Danubio	Lazio

		FROM	TO
Alfredo CASCINI	M	Independiente (Arg)	Toulouse
Marcello CASTELLINIA	D	Sampdoria	Bologna
CATANHA	F	Malaga	La Coruna
Pablo CAVALLERO	G	Velez Sarsfield	Celta Vigo
Albert CELADES	M	Celta Vigo	Real Madrid
Philippe CELDRAN	F	Valence	Sedan
Fabio CELESTINI	M	Lausanne	Troyes
CESAR Augusto	D	Paris Saint-Germain	Rennes
CESAR Sanchez	G	Valladolid	Real Madrid
CESAR SAMPAIO	M	Palmeiras	La Coruna
Paulo Cesar CHAVEZ	M	Guadalajara	Monterrey
CHIQUINHO CONDE	F	Vitoria Setubal	Al Shabab (Sau)
Dragan CIRIC	M	Barcelona	Valladolid
Sasa CIRIC	F	Tennis Borussia	Eintracht Frankfurt
CLAUDIO LOPEZ	F	Valencia	Lazio
John COLLINS	M	Everton	Fulham
Gianni COMANDINI	F	Vicenza	Milan
Daniel CORDONE	F	Racing Club	Newcastle
Carl CORT	F	Wimbledon	Newcastle
Ante COVIC	M	Hertha Berlin	Bochum
Hernan CRESPO	F	Parma	Lazio
Jordi CRUYFF	M	Manchester United	Alaves
Francisco DA COSTA	M	Monaco	Sporting Lisbon
Ousmane DABO	M	Parma	Monaco
Olivier DACOURT	M	Lens	Leeds
Eugene DADI	F	Linz ASK	Toulouse
Stephane DALMAT	M	Marseille	Paris Saint-Germain
Patricio D'AMICO	F	Belgrano Cordoba	Metz
Callum DAVIDSON	D	Blackburn	Leicester
Pierre DEBLOCK	M	Sedan	Auxerre
DEDE	D	Campinas	Vicenza
Eric DEFLANDRE	D	Club Brugge	Lyon
Frederic DEHU	D	Barcelona	Lyon
Philippe DELAYE	M	Montpellier	Rennes
Julio DELY VALDES	F	Oviedo	Malaga
DENILSON	M	Betis Sevilla	Flamengo (loan)
Jean-Christophe DEVAUX	D	Lyon	Strasbourg
Salif DIAO	D	Monaco	Sedan
DIDA	G	Corinthians	Milan
Aruna DINDANE	F	ASEC Abidjan	Anderlecht
Bernard DIOMEDE	F	Auxerre	Liverpool
El Hadji DIOUF	F	Rennes	Lens (loan)
Sylvain DISTIN	D	Gueugnon	Paris Saint-Germain
Manuel DOS SANTOS	D	Montpellier	Marseille
Vincent DOUKANTIE	M	Red Star Paris	Strasbourg
Mark DRAPER	M	Aston Villa	Southampton
DUARTE	F	Anapolina	Club Brugge
DUCA	D	Sporting Espinho	Campomaiorense
Ivan DUDIC	D	Red Star Belgrade	Benfica
Franck DUMAS	D	Marseille	Lens (loan)
Aldo DUSCHER	M	Sporting Lisbon	La Coruna
Richard DUTRUEL	G	Celta Vigo	Barcelona
Olivier ECHOUAFNI	M	Strasbourg	Rennes
EDERSON	F	Defensor	Iraklis
Christophe EGGIMANN	G	Metz	Strasbourg
EMERSON	M	Tenerife	La Coruna
Brett EMERTON	M	Sydney Olympic	Feyenoord
EMRE Asyk	D	Istanbulspor	Galatasaray
Joel EPALLE	M	Ethnikos	Panahaiki
Ivan ERGIC	M	Perth Glory	Basle (loan)
Fabian ERNST	M	Hamburg	Werder Bremen
FABIANO	F	Ponte Preta	Rennes

		FROM	TO
FARINOS	M	Valencia	Internazionale
Khadim FAYE	G	Felgueiras	Boavista
Demetrius FERREIRA	D	Nancy	Bastia
Patxi FERREIRA	D	Athletic Bilbao	Rayo Vallecano
Romain FERRIER	D	Montpellier	Guingamp
Yannick FISCHER	D	Marseille	Strasbourg
Marc-Vivien FOE	M	West Ham	Lyon
Antonio FOLHA	F	FC Porto	Standard Liege
Hubert FOURNIER	D	Lyon	Guingamp
Sebastien FREY	G	Verona	Internazionale
Esteban FUERTES	F	Derby	Lens
Petr GABRIEL	D	Sparta Prague	Kaiserslautern
Carlos GAMARRA	D	Atletico Madrid	Flamengo
Paul GASCOIGNE	M	Middlesbrough	Everton
Grigoris GEORGATOS	M	Internazionale	Olympiakos
Sinisa GOGIC	F	Olympiakos	APOEL Nicosia
Jaime GONZALEZ	F	Colo Colo	Bari
Nicolas GOUSSE	F	Metz	Troyes
Xavier GRAVELAINE	F	Paris Saint-Germain	Monaco
Thomas GRAVESEN	M	Hamburg	Everton
Eidur GUDJOHNSEN	F	Bolton	Chelsea
Thordur GUDJONSSON	F	Genk	Las Palmas
Gianni GUIGOU	M	Nacional (Uru)	Roma
Ali GUNES	M	Freiburg	Fenerbahce
Julio GUTIERREZ	F	Union Espanola	Udinese
Alf-Inge HAALAND	M	Leeds	Manchester City
Tomasz HAJTO	D	Duisburg	Schalke
HAKAN Sukur	F	Galatasaray	Inter
Jimmy Floyd HASSELBAINK	F	Atletico Madrid	Chelsea
Alan HAYDOCK	M	Molenbeek	La Louviere
Jorg HEINRICH	M	Fiorentina	Borussia Dortmund
Marek HEINZ	F	Sigma Olomouc	Hamburg
Luis HELGUERA	M	Zaragoza	Udinese
Tony HEURTEBIS	G	Troyes	Rennes
Martin HIDEN	D	Leeds	Austria Wien
Danny HIGGINBOTHAM	D	Manchester United	Derby
Dietmar HIRSCH	M	Duisburg	Unterhaching
David HOPKIN	M	Leeds	Bradford
Laurent HUARD	M	Sedan	Saint-Etienne
Don HUTCHISON	M	Everton	Sunderland
Klas INGESSON	M	Bologna	Marseille
Pablo ISLAS	F	Racing Club (Uru)	Nacional (Uru)
Andreas JAKOBSSON	D	Helsingborgs	Hansa Rostock
Mario JARDEL	F	FC Porto	Galatasaray
Claus JENSEN	M	Bolton	Charlton
Simon JENTZSCH	G	Karlsruhe	1860 Munich
JOAO PINTO	F	Benfica	Sporting Lisbon
Arco JOCHEMSEN	M	Vitesse Arnhem	Feyenoord
Frode JOHNSEN	F	Odd Grenland	Rosenborg
Allan JOHNSTON	M	Sunderland	Rangers
Franck JURIETTI	D	Bastia	Monaco
Mohamed KALLON	F	Reggina	Vicenza
Christian KAREMBEU	M	Real Madrid	Middlesbrough
Miroslav KARHAN	D	Betis Sevilla	Besiktas
Marcel KETELAER	M	Monchengladbach	Hamburg
Mateja KEZMAN	F	Partizan Belgrade	PSV Eindhoven
Dmitri KHLESTOV	D	Moscow Spartak	Besiktas
David KLEIN	G	Ajaccio	Metz
Tommy KNARVIK	M	Leeds	Brann Bergen
Bert KONTERMAN	D	Feyenoord	Rangers
Jukka KOSKINEN	D	Anyang Cheetahs	FC Haka
Mladen KRSTAJIC	D	Partizan Belgrade	Werder Bremen

		FROM	TO
Dietmar KUHBAUER	M	Real Sociedad	Wolfsburg
Yoann LACHOR	D	Lens	Servette (loan)
Bernard LAMA	G	Paris Saint-Germain	Rennes
Sabri LAMOUCHI	M	Monaco	Parma
Rune LANGE	F	Tromso	Trabzonspor
Nicolas LASPALLES	D	Paris Saint-Germain	Nantes
LAUREN Etame-Mayer	M	Mallorca	Arsenal
Philipp LAUX	G	Ulm	Borussia Dortmund
Steve LAYBUTT	D	Paramatta Power	Feyenoord
Nikola LAZETIC	M	Obilic	Fenerbahce
Adam LEDWON	M	Fortuna Koln	Rapid Wien
Alejandro LEMBO	D	Nacional (Uru)	Parma
Lionel LETIZI	G	Metz	Paris Saint-Germain
Maxym LEVYTSKIY	G	Chernomorets (Rus)	Saint-Etienne
Stephane LIEVRE	D	Nantes	Toulouse
Danijel LJUBOJA	F	Sochaux	Strasbourg
Vratislav LOKVENC	F	Sparta Prague	Kaiserslautern
Peter LOVENKRANDS	F	AB	Rangers
Peter LUCCIN	M	Marseille	Paris Saint-Germain
Andreas LUND	F	Wimbledon	Molde (loan)
Ian MAHON	M	Tranmere	Sporting Lisbon
Zoran MAMIC	M	Bayer Leverkusen	Bochum
Sergei MANDREKO	M	Hertha Berlin	Bochum
Silvio MARIC	M	Newcastle	FC Porto
MARIO SILVA	D	Boavista	Nantes
Bruno MARIONI	F	Independiente (Arg)	Villarreal
Steve MARLET	F	Auxerre	Lyon
Jean-Christophe MARQUET	D	Nice	Marseille
MARQUINHO	M	Sao Paulo	Bayer Leverkusen
Mickael MARSIGLIA	M	Strasbourg	Marseille
Jozo MATOVAC	D	AaB	Helsingborgs
Ronald MAUL	D	Arminia Bielefeld	Hamburg
MAZINHO	M	Celta Vigo	released
Giuseppe MAZZARELLI	D	St Gallen	Bari
Simone MAZZEI	M	Lazio	Udinese
Patrick MBOMA	F	Cagliari	Parma
Gary McALLISTER	M	Coventry	Liverpool
Silvio MEISSNER	M	Arminia Bielefeld	Stuttgart
Bernard MENDY	M	Caen	Paris Saint-Germain
Medhi MENIRI	D	Nancy	Troyes
Johan MICOUD	M	Bordeaux	Parma
Damir MILINOVIC	M	Rijeka	Bochum
Kenny MILLER	F	Hibernian	Rangers
Zoran MIRKOVIC	D	Juventus	Fenerbahce
Jose MOLINA	G	Atletico Madrid	La Coruna
Andy MOLLER	M	Borussia Dortmund	Schalke
Farid MONDRAGON	G	Independiente (Arg)	Metz
Jose Luis MORALES	F	Salamanca	New England Rev
Rudy MOURY	D	Germinal BA	La Louviere
Patrick MULLER	M	Grasshopper	Lyon
Pedro MUNITIS	F	Racing Santander	Real Madrid
Edwin MURATI	M	Paris Saint-Germain	Lille
Adrian MUTU	F	Internazionale	Verona
Erik MYKLAND	M	Panathinaikos	1860 Munich
Moussa N'DIAYE	F	Monaco	Sedan
Sylvain N'DIAYE	M	Bordeaux	Lille
Dejan NEMEC	G	Mura Murska	Club Brugge
Andreas NEUENDORF	M	Hertha Berlin	Bayer Leverkusen
Bruno N'GOTTY	M	Milan	Marseille
Morten NIELSEN	D	Strasbourg	Guingamp
Ian NOLAN	D	Sheffield Wed	Bradford
Shabani NONDA	F	Rennes	Monaco

		FROM	TO
Pascal NOUMA	F	Lens	Besiktas
NUNO GOMES	F	Benfica	Fiorentina
NUNO MENDES	D	Chaves	Strasbourg
Alex NYARKO	M	Lens	Everton
Perica OGNJENOVIC	F	Real Madrid	Valladolid (loan)
Paul OKON	M	Fiorentina	Middlesbrough
OKTAY Derelioglu	F	Gaziantepspor	Fenerbahce
Allen OLESEN	D	AB	Saint-Etienne
Sunday OLISEH	M	Juventus	Borussia Dortmund
Luis OLIVEIRA	F	Cagliari	Bologna
Fabian O'NEILL	M	Cagliari	Juventus
OSCAR Garcia	M	Valencia	Espanyol
Pasquale PADALINO	D	Fiorentina	Bologna
Alexander PANOV	F	Zenit St Petersburg	Saint-Etienne
PAULO SOUSA	M	Internazionale	Panathinaikos
Miran PAVLIN	M	Karlsruhe	FC Porto
Frederic PEIREMANS	M	Twente	Real Sociedad
Angelo PERUZZI	G	Internazionale	Lazio
Alen PETERNAC	F	Valladolid	Zaragoza
Svetoslav PETROV	M	Dobrudzha	Kyiv Dynamo (loan)
Stephane PICHOT	M	Laval	Lille
Christophe PIGNOL	D	Monaco	Lille
Giampiero PINZI	M	Lazio	Udinese
Robert PIRES	M	Marseille	Arsenal
Alessandro PISTONE	D	Newcastle	Everton
Juan Antonio PIZZI	F	River Plate (Arg)	FC Porto
Stephane PORATO	G	Marseille	Monaco
Mladen POSAVEC	M	Varteks	Bregenz
Jure PRIMORAC	D	Cannes	Rennes
Robert PROSINECKI	M	Dinamo Zagreb	Hrvatski dragovoljac
Diego QUINTERO	F	Gimnasio y Tiro	Monaco
Adil RAMZI	F	Willem II	PSV Eindhoven
Milan RAPAJIC	F	Perugia	Fenerbahce
Miguel REBOSIO	D	Sporting Cristal	Zaragoza
Serhii REBROV	F	Kyiv Dynamo	Tottenham
Andreas REINKE	G	Kaiserslautern	Iraklis
Martijn REUSER	F	Vitesse Arnhem	Ipswich
Haim REVIVO	M	Celta Vigo	Fenerbahce
Teddy RICHERT	G	Bordeaux	Lille
Fernando RICKSEN	M	AZ Alkmaar	Rangers
Paul RITCHIE	D	Hearts	Rangers
Carlos ROA	G	Unattached	Mallorca
Bruno RODRIGUEZ	F	Lens	Guingamp (loan)
ROQUE JUNIOR	D	Palmeiras	Milan
Uwe ROSLER	F	Tennis Borussia	Southampton
Laurentiu ROSU	M	Steaua Bucharest	Numancia
Jean-Christophe ROUVIERE	M	Bordeaux	Toulouse
Gary ROWETT	D	Birmingham City	Leicester
Simon ROYCE	G	Charlton	Leicester
RUI MARQUES	D	Ulm	Hertha Berlin
Rene RYDLEWICZ	M	Arminia Bielefeld	Hansa Rostock
Willy SAGNOL	D	Monaco	Bayern Munich
Walter SAMUEL	D	Boca Juniors	Roma
Jorge SAN ESTEBAN	D	Gimnasia LP	Atlante
Marian SAVU	F	National Bucharest	Shakhtar Donetsk
John SCALES	D	Tottenham	Ipswich
Jochen SEITZ	F	Unterhaching	Stuttgart
Michele SERENA	M	Internazionale	Parma
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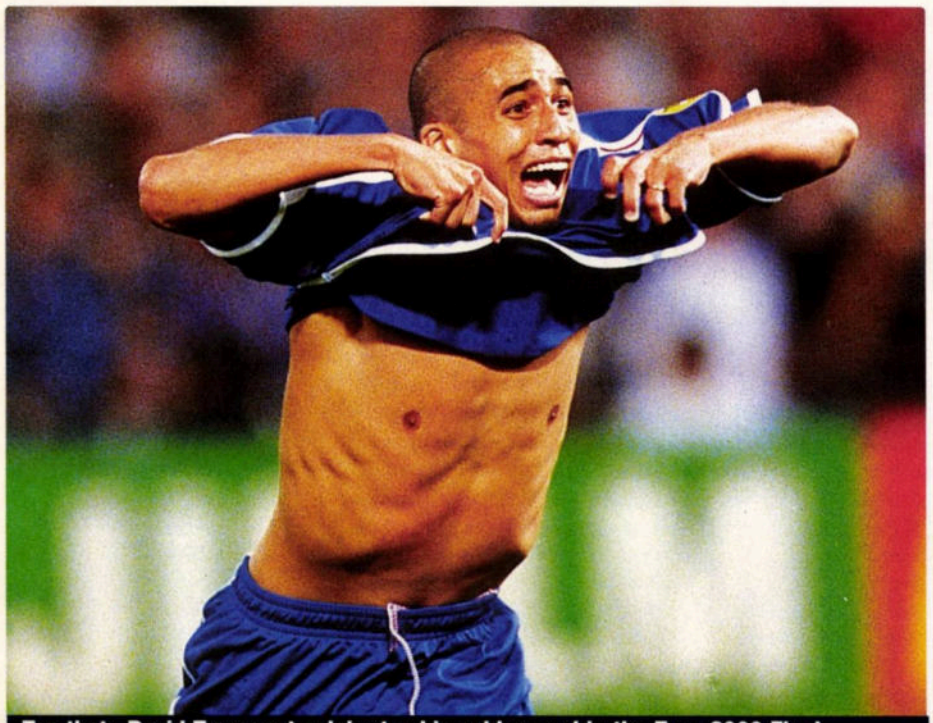
Moving on up

The future looks bright for two of the French stars of Euro 2000



Top that...David Trezeguet celebrates his golden goal in the Euro 2000 Final

Trezeguet: 'I'm ready for Serie A'

DAVID TREZEGUET does not expect the warmest of welcomes around Italy when he launches his new career with Juventus.

That's hardly surprising. It was the French substitute's golden goal, of course, which defeated Italy in extra time in the European Championship Final in Rotterdam at the start of July.

The former Monaco striker says: "I know my arrival at Juve is difficult to accept for some people. Perhaps some of them will want to insult me. But that's football. At least I think it proved that I always give my best at any time in the game for whatever team I am playing for."

Scoring the historic goal was enormous consolation to Trezeguet for the fact that he had failed to earn the nod from national coach Roger Lemerre as a first-choice striker.

Arsenal's Thierry Henry and Real Madrid's Nicolas Anelka started the finals in tandem and then Christophe Dugarry, Sylvain Wiltord and even Youri Djorkaeff appeared to have slipped in ahead of Trezeguet in the attacking pecking order.

The 22-year-old found that hard to accept. Looking back, he says: "It was hard for me to be a substitute all the time during the finals but that is up to the coach. Also, I had to face the fact that France were favourites for Euro 2000 partly because many of our players turned out for big foreign clubs. They have learned a lot there and had a lot of publicity. For example, Nico [Anelka] scored twice in two good matches for Real Madrid against Bayern Munich and made people talk about him as the right centre-forward for France. I had played 30 matches and scored a lot of goals but I did not have the same impact – playing in the French League was a handicap.

"Now it is my turn to go up a level and, hopefully, catch up. I believe in myself. Michel Platini said I have the qualities for Italian football and he should know.

"Because my family background is Argentine, I have a special affinity with football there. It was years ago, when I saw how wonderfully players such as Gabriel Batistuta and Hernan Crespo adapted to Serie A, that I said to myself: 'Why not me? That's all the more crucial to me now that I have won the World Cup and European title with France.

"I know that a lot of Italian clubs had wanted me for some time but the barrier was always the Monaco president [Jean-Louis Campora]. I have no special preference but I hoped to go to a big club such as Milan, Inter, Juve, the two Rome teams or Parma. In the end, after I talked to Juventus, I knew that was the right choice for me."

Campora was far from happy at Trezeguet's departure. He had heavily criticised the player's wanderlust 18 months ago and at one point even accused him of reading a newspaper in the dressing-room while then coach Jean Tigana was giving a half-time team talk.

Campora was also furious with Trezeguet for appearing to encourage initial transfer interest from Roma. The player then knuckled down to forging a League title-winning attacking partnership with Italian Marco Simone and Argentine playmaker Marcelo Gallardo.

Trezeguet ended the French domestic season as second-top scorer with 22 goals, one adrift of Lyon's Brazilian, Sonny Anderson. He even threatened to take the top scorer's award himself after notching two late goals against Le Havre in his final game for Monaco at the Stade Louis II. This was Trezeguet's response to having been dropped the previous week for missing a plane sent by Monaco to pick him up in Paris after he inspired France's comeback in a friendly against Slovenia.

In the last round of League matches, unfortunately, Trezeguet failed to score against Saint-Etienne and Anderson's goal against Montpellier was enough to put him clear by one.

Just Fontaine, still the World Cup's record marksman with 13 goals in the 1958 finals, is one of Trezeguet's greatest admirers. He says: "Of all our present strikers I believe Trezeguet to be the best of the lot but he always needs to play in tandem with another striker – ideally Henry – not on his own. As for the others, Anelka needs space and has a lot to learn with his back to goal; Sylvain Wiltord is lively but lacks consistency; while Stephane Guivarc'h can shoot with both feet and is good in the air but was late coming to international football."

Trezeguet's father, Jorge, also believes in his son's qualities and expects him to underline them at Juventus. Father says: "People never stop saying how fast players like Henry and Anelka run. But David thinks quickly. His speed is in his head.

"I think David has proved in the Euro Final that what they do with their legs, David can do mentally in a second.

"David is a hard man and that is why he has progressed. At Monaco they wanted players to be sheep during the week and wolves in matches. In this job of scoring goals at top level, you have to be a wolf all the time."

Expect Trezeguet to come out snarling when he pulls on the famous black and white stripes.

Keir Radnedge

Fact file

Club Juventus (Ita)
Country France
Born October 15, 1977, in Rouen
Previous clubs Platense (Arg), Monaco
International debut January 1998, v Spain
International caps 21 (8 goals)
Honours European Championship 2000; French League 1997, 2000

France's No 1...Fabien Barthez

Fact file

Club Manchester United (Eng)
Country France
Born June 28, 1971, in Lavelanet
Previous clubs Toulouse, Marseille, Monaco
International debut May 1994, v Australia
International caps 38
Honours World Cup 1998; European Championship 2000; French League 1997, 2000 (Monaco)

Barthez: The new clown in town

SOMETIMES not even regal decrees are respected. Despite his best efforts, Monaco's number one supporter and benefactor, Prince Albert, eventually had to admit defeat this summer and watch his favourite player, keeper Fabien Barthez, quit the principality for Manchester United.

A year ago, Barthez had seemed on the verge of heading for Old Trafford, only for Prince Albert to inform Monaco president Jean-Louis Campora that the French national team No 1 was irreplaceable and to break the bank of Monte Carlo if necessary to retain his services.

Campora duly doubled Barthez's money, giving him a five-year deal worth £200,000 a month and the Prince and the keeper were satisfied.

However, the Barthez-Monaco love affair would soon turn sour. A thigh and then a groin injury kept him on the sidelines for a large part of last season, he was far from outstanding when he did play, and coach Claude Puel began to become irritated by the keeper's tendency to turn up late for training.

Matters came to a head in early May when Puel attacked Barthez for giving less than 100 per cent in a controversial 4-2 defeat at his former club, Marseille.

The road was now clear for Manchester United boss Sir Alex Ferguson to have another stab at recruiting the French keeper he so admired. Negotiations were long and complicated and at one point then United chairman Martin Edwards, infuriated with the leaking of contract details by the Barthez camp, appeared to have pulled the plug.

But frustrated by the inconsistencies of Mark Bosnich, Massimo Taibi and Raymond Van der Gouw in the United goal, Ferguson made sure talks continued and finally agreement was reached. Monaco received £8.2million and Barthez signed a six-year contract with the Red Devils.

"Of course, I will earn a lot of money in England [reportedly between £150,000 and £220,000 per month]," declared Barthez. "But it wasn't cash that made me sign for Manchester United. What prompted me to come here was the prospect of playing for one of the biggest clubs in the world and to win a maximum number of trophies. Manchester United is another world completely compared to Monaco, it's light-years away. "

The English press are already setting Barthez up for a fall, citing his somewhat eccentric style and supposed vulnerability when coming for crosses. But for Bordeaux boss, Elie Baup, who was Barthez's goalkeeping coach at Toulouse, there is no chance of the French No 1 flopping in the Premiership.

"Fabien is among the best two or three keepers in the world and proved it conclusively at the European Championship," says Baup. "He had a great defence in front of him, but on the rare occasion when they were breached, he was always there to make the decisive stops.

"Naturally a lot will be expected of him at Manchester United. But there's no way he will be intimidated by his new surroundings or by a new set of opponents who want to test him out. He's played in Champions League, World Cup and European Championship Finals and made it look like a training session. He has no idea what fear is."

Nick Bidwell

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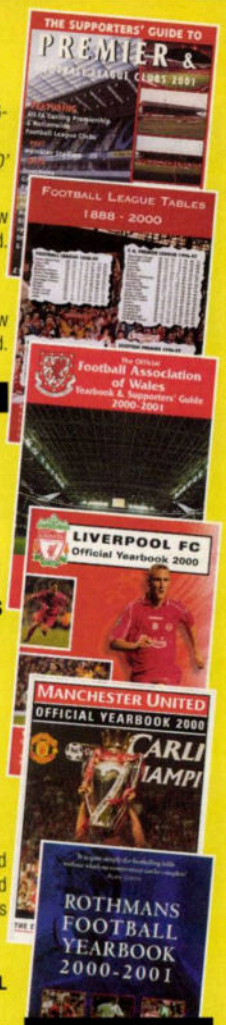

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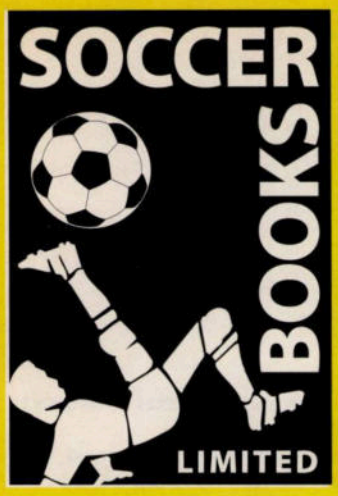

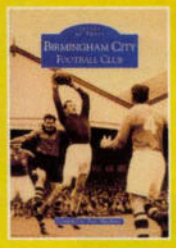

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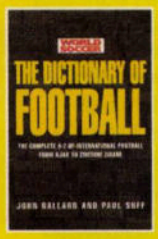

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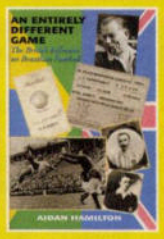

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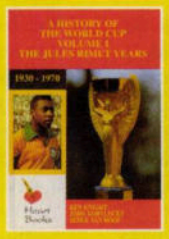

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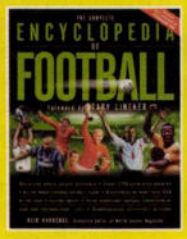

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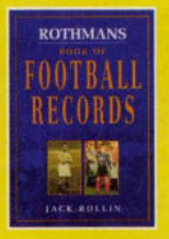

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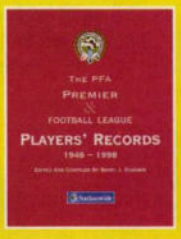

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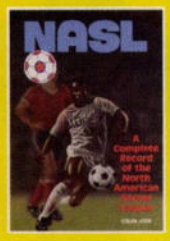

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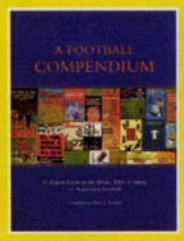

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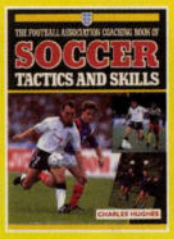

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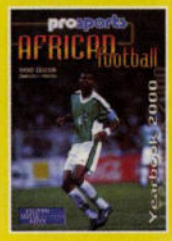

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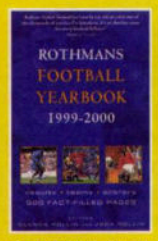

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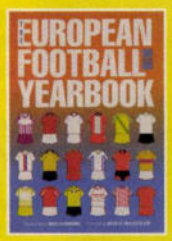

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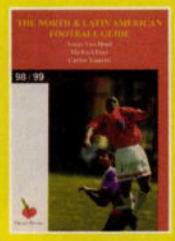

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In Pele's shadow

Ronaldo's troubles echo down the years, writes Tim Vickery

AS the ever-shortening European close season draws to an end, Ronaldo is back in Brazil and trying to keep a low profile as he fights to win his latest battle with injury.

"I don't like to appear so much in the media when I'm not playing," he said. "I miss talking about football rather than about injuries all the time."

But after his complicated knee surgery there is no guarantee that he will be able to recapture the form that twice won him the title of the world's best player.

He was poor in the air, uncomfortable with his back to goal and only average with his left foot, so he never was a complete attacker. His game was based on one extraordinary asset – his explosive pace when running with the ball. These bursts of acceleration clearly put a huge strain on his knees.

So if he can no longer produce such speed – or sustain it over 90 minutes – then his future must be in doubt. If Ronaldo is to recuperate, then in the long run his prestige can only be regained in the place where he lost it – the World Cup finals.

During France 98 his knees already were giving him problems, but it was his mind that buckled under the strain of carrying an over-hyped team through to the Final.

The comeback road is daunting. There are many obstacles to be overcome before Ronaldo can think of glory in 2002, or even 2006. But at least he can take heart from the example of his most illustrious predecessor. In hindsight, Pele's global reputation as the king of football seems inevitable. The reality, however, was murkier, and his story carries interesting parallels with the trials of Ronaldo.

Take away the 1970 World Cup, and the Pele legend begins to crumble. Without his glorious contribution to the beautiful team, the story takes on an aspect of unfulfilled promise.

Pele was a magnificent 17-year-old prodigy in the 1958 World Cup, and led Santos to two World Club titles in the early 1960s. Some of his subsequent career, however, looks like a let-down.

He played an endless procession of exhibition matches all over the world as Santos prostituted the talent at their disposal by becoming the Harlem Globetrotters of football. He then ended his playing days in the banal, the grotesque, and in the event unsuccessful, North American Soccer League of the mid-1970s.

Problems...Ronaldo at France 98

Pele also did little in the World Cups of 1962, when he limped out, and 1966, when he was kicked out by Portuguese opponents. Two years passed before he returned to the national team. He never played another competitive match, or even an international friendly, in Europe, and for a while maintained that he would not play in any more World Cups.

After being persuaded to change his mind he formed a wonderful partnership with the equally intelligent Tostao as Brazil qualified in style for Mexico 70.

The coach was Joao Saldanha, a legendary figure in Brazilian football circles.

At his peak...Pele during the 1970 World Cup

With charisma to bear comparison with Bill Shankly, Saldanha had stood out both as a coach and a sports journalist. He was, nonetheless, a strange choice to be put in charge of the national team. Brazil's military dictatorship was at its height, and Saldanha had close connections with the Communist party. Nevertheless, taking over at a time when the Brazil team were at a low ebb, Saldanha's clear leadership and concise tactical concepts brought immediate results.

Brazil were seen as among the favourites to win the 1970 World Cup. But three months before the competition, Saldanha was mysteriously dismissed. The conventional wisdom has been that the military government were behind the sacking. But if Saldanha's politics were such a problem he would never have been appointed in the first place.

Saldanha gave the lie to such rumours. He returned to journalism and immediately wrote an impassioned open letter to Brazilian football. With nothing to lose – he was well aware that he would not get his old job back – Saldanha even went out of his way to praise President Medici ("for a long time Brazil has needed a president who is truly interested in football").

Saldanha called his open letter the most important of his writings. He took great care over it and made sure that the real reasons for his removal were quite clear. "The whole thing centres on Pele," he wrote.

Saldanha had just taken the audacious decision to drop Brazil's star player, justifying his action by saying: "When I took Pele out of the team it was in the hope of counting on him in the World Cup." The great man was suffering from an excess of football.

"Pele is the most sacrificed, most exploited player in Brazilian football," declared Saldanha. "Many people around him have got rich."

Indeed, Pele's body was paying the price. Saldanha reported that his star had turned up for international duty with an "inflamed right ankle, just out of plaster, with treatment incomplete. Infected chillblains and corns on nearly all his toes. Bruising on his right sole, which hardly allows him to put weight on the foot."

Saldanha could never get his doctors to put such information in writing. It would give clear justification for leaving Pele out of the team, and as Saldanha wrote: "Pele has to play at whatever price. When I wanted to drop him everything fell in on me. 'Joao,' said a director of the national team, 'with Pele out the sponsor will stop paying us. Don't do it, Joao, otherwise we'll have no more money.'"

'Ronaldo's prestige can only be regained in the place where he lost it – the World Cup finals'

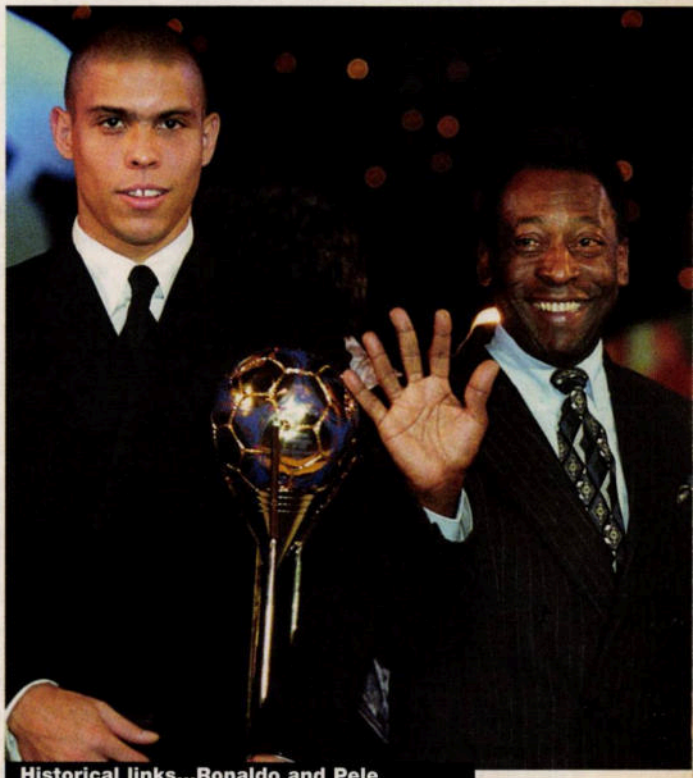
The national team doctor – for whom Saldanha reserved his fiercest criticism – was Lidio Toledo, who 28 years later was chief doctor of the Brazil team at France 98. The coach hurriedly chosen to replace Saldanha was Mario Zagallo, who selected the post-convulsion Ronaldo for the World Cup Final.

Saldanha's open letter echoes eerily down the years – he even refers to receiving "ignoble proposals from sellers of sports equipment". He also refers to a scene he witnessed when Brazil were on a European tour in 1963. Injury robbed Pele of his only chance to play at Wembley, and four days later Brazil faced Italy in Milan. "The Italian agents said that unless Pele played, the game was off," wrote Saldanha, and "the contract with the Italian federation made Pele's presence obligatory."

In a precursor to the events of July 12, 1998, Brazil lost 3-0. Pele aggravated his injury and played no further part in the tour.

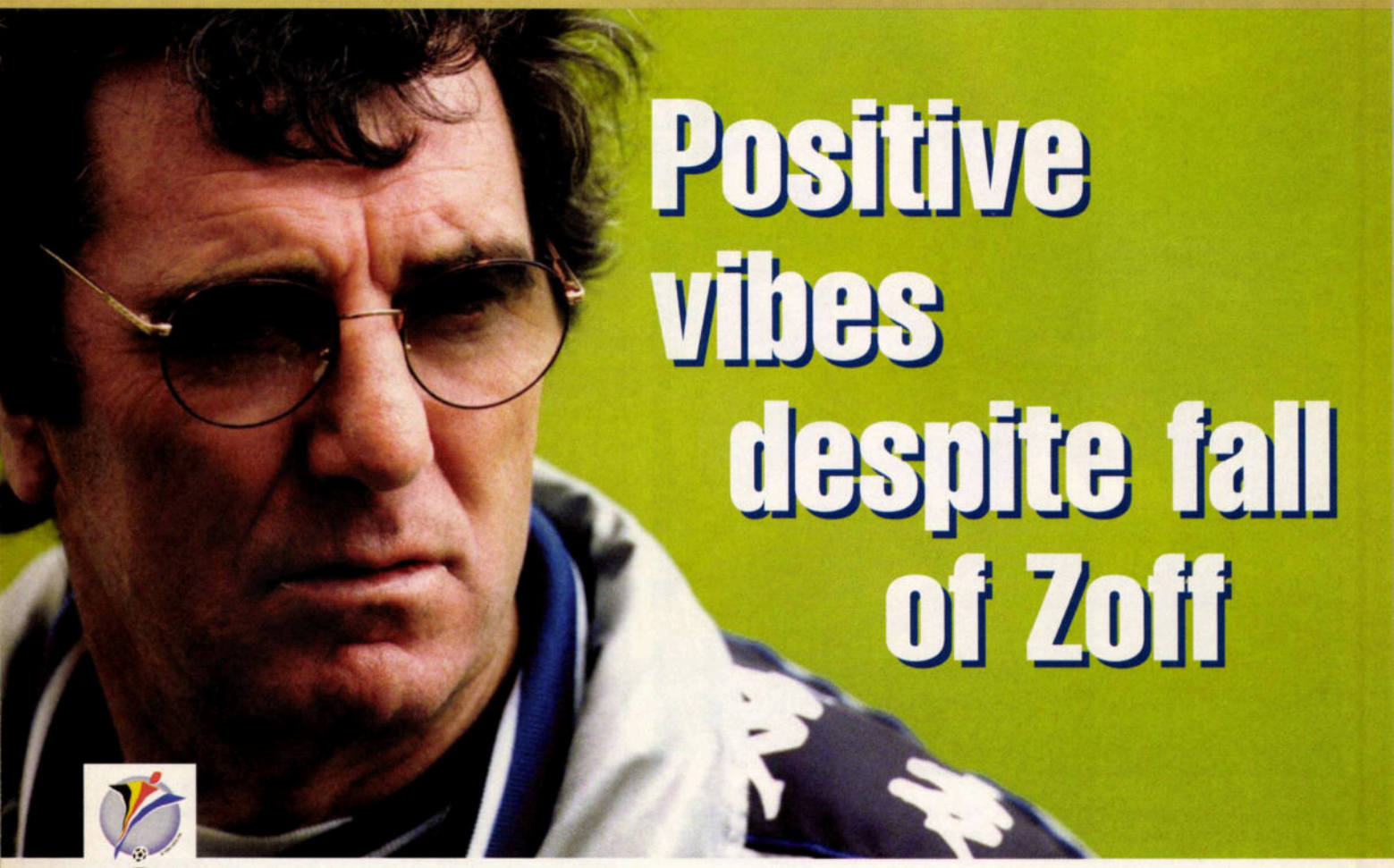
The same Italian city now plays host to Ronaldo's recovery. The record shows that Pele overcame the obstacles in his path to confirm his greatness with some magnificent showings in the 1970 World Cup, won by Brazil with perhaps their greatest-ever team.

The odds seem to be against the Ronaldo story having such a happy ending.



Historical links...Ronaldo and Pele

Positive vibes despite fall of Zoff



UEFA EURO 2000

In the first of our articles reflecting on the events of the European Championship, Paddy Agnew reports on an amazing month for the Italian national team

TWENTY SECONDS, twenty miserable seconds. Twenty-two million Italians gathered around their TV sets are unlikely to easily forget the national team's dramatic, last-gasp defeat by France in the Euro 2000 Final in Rotterdam. Just when Italy stood on the brink of a remarkable triumph, the redoubtable French scored that late injury time equaliser through Sylvain Wiltord.

The collective groan that went through the Italian section of the press box at the Feyenoord stadium could be heard echoing all the way down the peninsula of 'Il Bel Paese'. However, even after France had gone on to win the trophy, ironically through new Juventus signing David Trezeguet, the widespread sense of disappointment was obviously mixed with satisfaction.

Italy came out of Euro 2000 with colours flying. The team may have displayed a totally negative attitude in that absurd semi-final win against Holland, but they fully redeemed themselves with a sparkling performance in the Final.

Most commentators would agree that France were the overall outstanding side at Euro 2000 but even those not well disposed towards Italian soccer (and there seem to be a lot of them about) would agree that, on the night, Italy more than matched the mighty world champions.

The architect of this coaching masterpiece, of course, was Dino Zoff. The Italian squad was, after all, some way short of the overall strength of the French 22, even though it contained world-class talent in players like Alessandro Nesta, Paolo Maldini, Fabio Cannavaro, Francesco Toldo and Francesco Totti. Yet Zoff maximised resources, rode his luck and so very nearly went all the way.

Zoff's handling of his squad was quite simply exemplary, not only in relation to his inspired intuitions re team selection but also, and perhaps more importantly, in relation to the calm, controversy-free atmosphere that reigned at the Italians' training headquarters in Geel, near Antwerp. Which other coach could have handled the potential timebomb created by the Francesco Totti v Alessandro Del Piero debate without eventually seeing it go off in his face?

Given that many Italians had been openly sceptical about the prospects for the *Azzurri* before the finals, the performance of Zoff's team met with huge nationwide approval. (*World Soccer*, by the way, was not among the sceptics since we predicted that Italy would "go out, with guns blazing, at the quarter-final or semi-final stage".)

State President Carlo Azeglio Ciampi, who attended the Final, accurately caught the nation's mood by visiting the Italian players in their dressing-room after the game to tell them that they should return to Italy with their heads held high and "full of pride". The next day, he nominated all 22 squad members to be created *Cavalieri Della Repubblica*, an honour previously bestowed on Italy's 1982 World Cup-winning team by then President Sandro Pertini.

There was, however, one significant exception

to this mood of general acclaim, namely centre-right opposition leader and Milan president Silvio Berlusconi. At the very moment that the Italian football community was lavishing huge praise on Zoff and Italy, Berlusconi chose to launch an astonishing and bitter attack on the coach.

At a news conference on the day after the Final, Berlusconi was asked for his opinion on Italy's close-run defeat. "We should and could have won," he replied. "There were certain things happening on the pitch that you could not ignore. You cannot leave the source of [the French] game, Zidane, free to run the show and prompt all their actions, especially in a Final.

"Even an amateur coach would have realised what was happening and would have won by stopping Zidane. A professional coach cannot 'not see' certain things. It was simply unworthy."

Some coaches might have ignored Berlusconi. Not so Zoff. Perhaps still feeling emotionally stretched after the game, he found Berlusconi's words deeply offensive.

Summoning a hastily-convened news conference on the Tuesday after the Final, he told reporters that he was resigning, adding that he had been "very upset" by the criticism and that he had been so angry he had been unable to sleep.

"I don't understand why he [Berlusconi] has to denigrate somebody else's work. A person, his profession and his professionalism have all been offended," declared Zoff. "I have been publicly denigrated and treated with huge disrespect and this really annoys me. It is not Berlusconi's technical analysis but rather his personalised evaluations that have upset me."

Zoff was perhaps wrong to resign but he was dead right to dismiss Berlusconi's specific 'technical analysis' re Italy's alleged failure to close down Zinedine Zidane. In fact, the Italian handling of Zidane was so successful that the great Frenchman had by far his worst game of the tournament. He was consistently closed down by an Italian midfield whose combative attitude towards him largely contributed to a first half that was tense and dramatic but more stalemate than flamboyant.

The upshot of this dramatic month in the life and times of the nation's football team is that Italy now have a new coach, Giovanni Trapattoni, and a side whose reputation has been greatly enhanced. Zoff, in his stubborn way, refused to withdraw his resignation, leaving the Italian federation no option but to look for a replacement.

One of Berlusconi's further criticisms of Zoff had been that his Italy had played along classic Italian, old-fashioned and overly-defensive lines at Euro 2000. The appointment of Trapattoni is unlikely to have much pleased Berlusconi, since if he felt Zoff was defensive, he is going to have to look for a new word to describe traditionalist 'Il Trap'.

In truth, however, Trapattoni's sides, like those of Zoff, have always played an attractive style of soccer in which defensive solidity clearly plays a fundamental role but not to the exclusion of creative talent – witness the vital role that Michel Platini played in his winning Juventus team of the 1980s.

'Some coaches might have ignored Berlusconi but an emotional Zoff found his criticism deeply offensive'

Italy were lucky to have such an experienced and successful coach as 61-year-old Trapattoni on standby. Winner of seven Italian titles with Juventus and Inter, as well as a Bundesliga shield with Bayern Munich, Trapattoni had been unemployed since resigning from Fiorentina at the end of last season and after guiding the Florence club into a UEFA Cup place by finishing seventh in Serie A on 51 points, 21 behind champions Lazio.

Asked what he would have done had he been criticised in that manner by Berlusconi, Trapattoni told reporters: "I'd have replied ironically, or maybe I'd have told one of my funny stories."

Hired on a two-year contract through to the 2002 World Cup finals in South Korea and Japan, Trapattoni's annual salary will be the same as that of Zoff, namely £400,000 after tax. His first game in charge will be a World Cup qualifier, away to Hungary on September 3.

Whatever the circumstances in which he found himself in the job, Trapattoni takes over at a very positive moment. Not only does Italy's World Cup qualifying group of Romania, Hungary, Georgia and Lithuania look relatively straightforward but also the new man inherits from Zoff a battle-hardened side in which key elements such as Totti, Nesta, Cannavaro, Del Piero and Toldo can only get better.

Italy's positive Euro 2000 run, Trapattoni's winning track record, his international experience (remember that he won all football's major international club trophies with Juventus) and, last but not least, his resilient temperament are all reasons for suggesting that, even at this early stage, Italy have to go down on the shortlist of favourites to win the 2002 World Cup.

Watching brief...Albertini is just too late to prevent Zidane keeping France moving in the Final

One of the best

UEFA's Andy Roxburgh tells Gavin Hamilton why Euro 2000 was such a memorable tournament

THE general consensus was that Euro 2000 was one of the best tournaments in living memory. Technically and tactically, physically and emotionally, the quality of the football shone through.

"As an event it was dramatic and exciting," says UEFA technical director Andy Roxburgh. "Some of the finishes were sensational, with teams coming back from the dead.

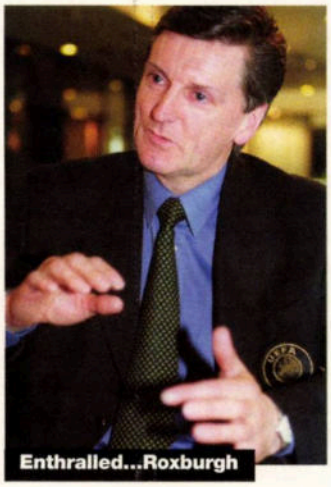
"You can have dramatic games that are of poor quality, but the technical quality of the games at Euro 2000 was higher than the last World Cup. In fact, I'd go so far as to say it was better than anything we have seen in the last 10 years."

Roxburgh and his team of technical observers are now working on a report on the tournament which will be presented at a coaches' convention in early September. They certainly have enough material with which to work. "Some of the individual play we saw was beyond belief," says Roxburgh. "The beautiful game really lived up to its billing."

'Some of the finishes were sensational… the individual play beyond belief'

Naturally, Roxburgh, a former manager, is keen to praise the coaches, saying: "They had a much more positive attitude to the games. Even the Italians, who based their game on solid defence and the swift counter-attack, opened up in the Final. But teams like France, Portugal, Holland, Spain, even Yugoslavia, were very, very open."

Flexibility and fluidity are likely to be two of the keywords that appear regularly in the UEFA technical report. "There was the greater flexibility in the team structures," says Roxburgh. "Gone are the days when you would have two blocks of four and two big strikers standing shoulder to shoulder."


Enthralled...Roxburgh

Tactically, Roxburgh believes the game has moved on since Euro 96. "One of the differences between this tournament and 1996, and even the World Cup, was that there were far fewer teams playing 3-5-2 with a detached libero. Many more teams now play 4-4-2 with a flat defence. They squeeze the play a lot more, forcing the midfield to win the ball back more quickly and launch the fast counter-attack. It makes things more exciting."

These tactical developments mean attacking midfielders, rather than deep-lying playmakers, are the key figures in the modern set-up.

Roxburgh says: "Years ago, Graeme Souness was a classic midfield general. He sat deep, spraying passes around and controlling the game. That sort of player has now disappeared from the game because they don't get the space to function effectively.

"Players like Luis Figo don't operate in that deep role, they have moved forward and wide to be more free. They can do that because they have the protection behind them."

One of the trends that Euro 2000 highlighted was the so-called 'latinisation' of football, with France, Italy and Portugal doing well at the expense of England, Germany and the Scandinavians. But the performances of Holland and the Czech Republic makes talk of a north-south divide in European football a little premature.

"My colleague, Rinus Michels, has a phrase 'the top top teams, or double top teams'," says Roxburgh. "We saw the top 16 teams in Europe, but within that you had a top group, in which we would place the final four [France, Italy, Portugal, and Holland] plus Spain, along with the Czechs, who were terribly unlucky to be in the so-called 'group of death'.

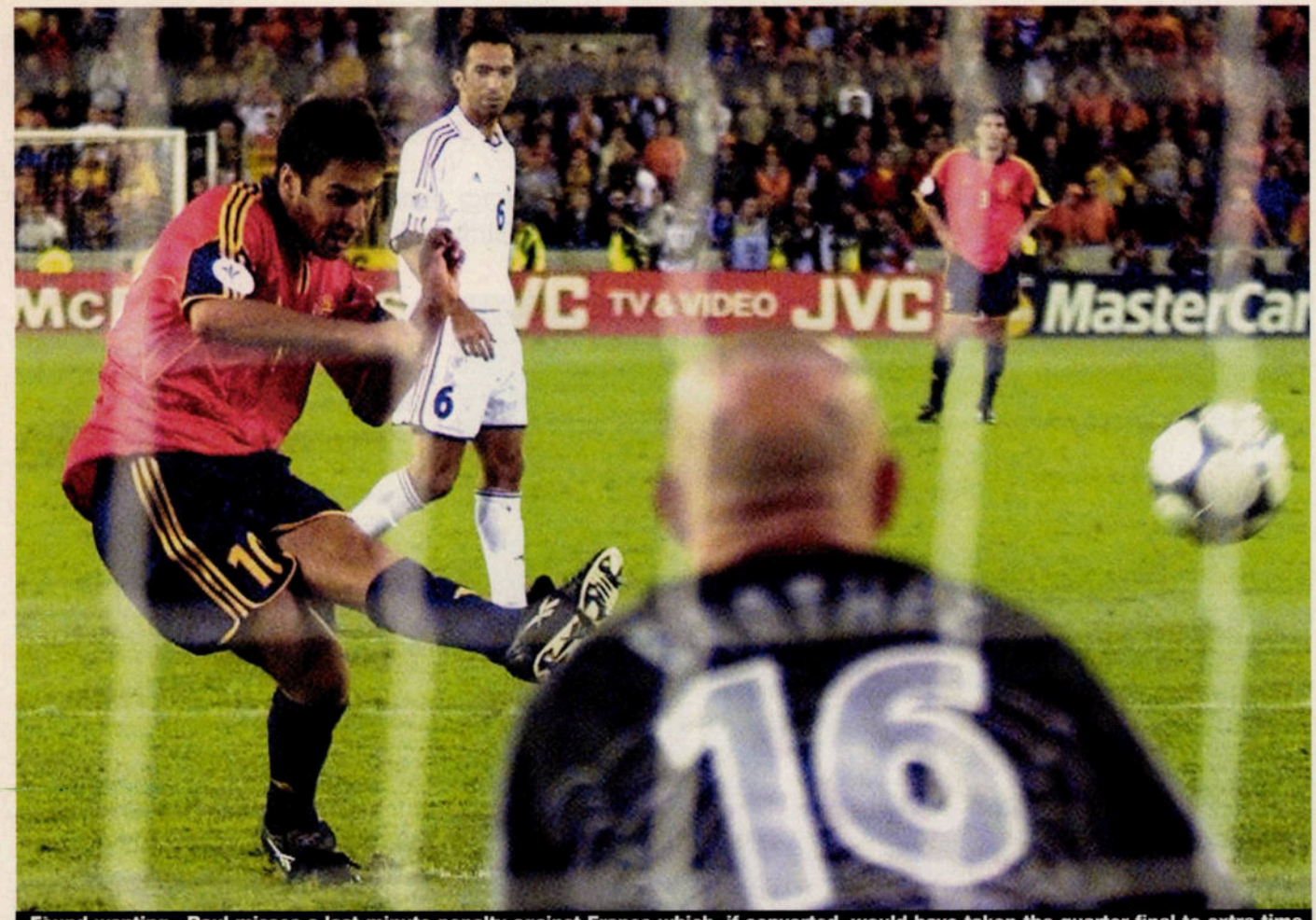
"The 'double top' teams had this main ingredient of flexibility, but their players were also great athletes with tactical and technical expertise."

A far more important divide is between countries with players who are competing in the Champions League on a regular basis, and those who are not. "The Champions League is not just about money," says Roxburgh, "it is a competition that refines and develops players and makes them more competitive. That might make it sound a bit like a Swiss finishing school, but it's a crucial place for providing opportunities for star players to develop."

At Euro 2000, the stars were presented with the opportunity to shine, and did so in spectacular fashion. "Zinedine Zidane was the epitome of them," says Roxburgh. "He said during the tournament that he was at the summit of his art. That was a wonderful way of saying how magnificent he was.

"But there were so many other great players, such as Figo, Rui Costa and even Pavel Nedved, who was so unlucky not to play in the final stages. There were more players of greater technical ability than ever before."

Wizard of the dribble...Luis Figo takes on the French defence



Found wanting...Raul misses a last-minute penalty against France which, if converted, would have taken the quarter-final to extra time

The class divide

Spain were short on quality again, says Jeff King

SPAIN is a country in which two football journalists rarely agree on the shape of the ball, let alone anything more contentious. But as the dust settled on the Spanish no-show at Euro 2000 there was a rare media consensus: Spain failed for the same reason they always do – a lack of genuine world-class players.

Spain have no defenders as poised as Laurent Blanc, no forwards as complete as Patrick Kluivert, no creative players on the same planet as Zinedine Zidane or Luis Figo. And it has always been that way. No Spaniard has been European Footballer of the Year since Luis Suarez in 1960. There are no Spanish footballers alongside Cruyff, Beckenbauer, Platini and Eusebio in the pantheon of Europe's all-time greats. Spain's collective failure to compete with the heavyweights is illustrated by one stark fact: the Euro 2000 defeat by France was the 12th time Spain have played a reigning world champion; their record reads won 0, drawn 3, lost 9.

Once again Spain were burdened with unrealistic expectations because of the false belief that successful club sides equal a potent national unit. Twenty-four of the 85 Euro 2000 goals were scored by players from Spanish clubs. No other national league contributed anything like that total. But neither Kluivert nor Savo Milosevic – the joint top scorers – were wearing the red of Spain.

Spanish footballers continue to lack the genes that make great penalty-box assassins. No international defender is going to be intimidated by Joseba Etxeberria, Spain's only ever-present player in coach Jose Camacho's 22 games. Ismael Urzaiz is the kind of rudimentary target man redolent of black and white news-reels. Alfonso was king for a day against Yugoslavia but remains a journeyman. Raul – Spain's great but fragile pretender – looked all played out at the beginning of the tournament. By the France game, you almost expected the towering Marcel Desailly or Blanc to kick sand in his face.

'Raul, the great pretender, looked all played out at the beginning of the tournament'

Camacho did little to enhance his reputation at Euro 2000, either. Nobody in Spain understood his decision to pick a squad without Fernando Morientes or Salva. The gifted but dawdling Josep Guardiola and the hapless Juan Carlos Valeron were blatantly miscast as dual midfield pivots. Gaizka Mendieta, Ivan Helguera and Pedro Munitis arrived at Euro 2000 as Spain's form players, but not until the final game did Camacho start with all three. And given Spain's lack of thrust from midfield, why did Gerard get only 13 minutes' action – the last 13?

Spain will no doubt stroll through a World Cup qualifying group populated by Bosnia, Liechtenstein, Israel and Austria. Spanish clubs will continue to make waves in the Champions League. But as Euro 2000 proved, neither factor is relevant at major finals. Either Spain unearth some genuine world-class talent – especially in attack – or come 2002 they will be bit players again.

Rudi to the rescue

Germany have turned to a surprising stop-gap to arrest their decline, says Nick Bidwell

Shake on it...Voller will hand over the reins to Christoph Daum, right, next June

NEVER mind the coaching experience, feel the star quality. Every time Germany make an early exit from the European Championship, the federation (DFB) responds to the crisis by tearing up the rulebook when selecting a new man to lead the national team.

Back in 1984, the fact that German footballing legend Franz Beckenbauer had no official coaching licence did not prevent him being made national coach. Now history has repeated itself following the team's abysmal Euro 2000 and the resignation of Erich Ribbeck.

New coach Rudi Voller may only be a caretaker and will hand over the baton to Leverkusen boss Christoph Daum next June. But like Beckenbauer, Voller has absolutely no track record as a coach.

Yes, he was an outstanding German international striker, scoring 47 goals in 90 appearances and notably spearheading their conquest of the 1990 World Cup. However, since retiring from the game as a player in 1996, he has not been anywhere near a dug-out, occupying as he has the role of sports director at Leverkusen.

The selection of Voller was a bolt from the blue for all in Germany, not least the man himself. He had gone to the DFB's emergency meeting in Cologne as party-pooper in chief, there to stop the federation luring away the highly-rated Daum before his contract expired in June 2001. Little did he realise that he would ultimately prove the compromise solution to the national team's leadership problems.

"Never in my wildest dreams would I have thought that when the talks started, I would end up being named coach of the *Nationalmannschaft* four hours later," said 40-year-old Voller. "Gerhard Mayer-Vorfelder, the federation's president-in-waiting, certainly surprised me when he suggested I do the job on an interim basis. But I thought about it for a while and decided to accept."

Voller will be assisted by a 'task force' led by Bayern Munich vice-president Karl-Heinz Rummenigge, while the new man's lack of an official German coaching badge means he must be 'covered' by a fully-qualified assistant.

At the time of writing no decision has been reached on the identity of the second-in-command, but ex-Dortmund coach Michael Skibbe, former Duisburg boss Friedhelm Funkel, Voller's one-time national team-mate Andy Brehme and ex-Stuttgart coach Joachim Low are all in the running.

The current mantra in German football circles is 'a fresh start for the *Nationalmannschaft*'. But the initial signs are that Voller may not prove the new broom everyone expects him to be. After all, he has already spoken about the possibility of bringing experienced and always-controversial midfielders Mario Basler and Stefan Effenberg back into the international fold, though the latter has insisted he remains unavailable. Voller said: "There will be no palace revolution under me. I will demand commitment and discipline; they are the key to success. Players must be keen to play for their country."

'Since retiring from the game as a player in 1996, Voller has not been anywhere near a dug-out'

Even so, given Germany's abject results at Euro 2000, new faces in the line-up are inevitable. The Hamburg trio of defender Ingo Hertzsch, midfielder Marcel Ketelaer and attacking livewire Roy Prager are being widely touted for a call-up, as are Freiburg's right-flank flyer Tobias Willi, Werder Bremen utility man Torsten Frings and his club colleague, central defender Frank Baumann. Martin Max of 1860 Munich, last season's top scorer in the Bundesliga, could also come into the reckoning.

Those fortunate enough not to take part in Germany's ill-fated Euro 2000 expedition – Hertha playmaker Stefan Beinlich, Leverkusen forward Oliver Neuville and injured Dortmund defender Christian Worns – are set for a swift recall.

Leverkusen's Jens Nowotny looks a certainty to replace Lothar Matthaus at libero, while in the absence of any valid alternatives up front, national team skipper Oliver Bierhoff should again find himself leading the line once he has recovered from the calf injury which restricted him to just one game – against Romania – in the European Championship.

Goalkeeper Oliver Kahn, central defender Marko Rehmer and midfielders Jens Jeremies, Michael Ballack and Sebastian Deisler need have no worries about being victims of the cull.

"I have only one goal in this job," said Voller, "and that is to make sure we still have every chance of qualifying for the 2002 World Cup finals when Christoph Daum takes over."

Over and out...Rijkaard and his players are disconsolate after the semi-final defeat by Italy

Rijkaard takes the rap

Holland's ultimate failure can be blamed on the coach, argues Klaas-Jan Droppert

TWO years ago, many coaches in Holland wondered why Frank Rijkaard was appointed national team coach. A man without experience could not handle such a responsible job, they maintained.

But until the Euro 2000 semi-final against Italy, the former Ajax and Milan player was given the benefit of the doubt. However, his colleagues were right in the end. After the inability of the Dutch players to convert penalties, Rijkaard's lack of experience was held to be the main cause of his team's exit.

Despite having two years' preparation, he did not seem to be ready for the challenge of winning the European title. He changed his tactics and players after one match and it was obvious Holland were not in top form.

In such a situation much is required from the coach. Rijkaard resorted to psychological tricks, blaming his players for not showing enough fighting spirit. Later he was helped by Johan Cruyff, whose critical comments irritated many players and had a galvanising effect on the squad.

But however much the players tried, the coach's role proved crucial against Italy.

When Rijkaard was needed most, he failed. During his 14 friendlies in charge he had never had to deal with a tense match situation. Then, against Italy, when he had the chance to do something decisive, he let the opportunity slip. After Italy's Gianluca Zambrotta had been sent off he should have brought on an extra striker. He did not, and the Italians, instead of panicking, were allowed to control the match.

Rijkaard's substitutions showed that he finds it difficult to maintain a distance from the players. He gave close friends Peter Van Vossen and Clarence Seedorf too many chances to play, but left Pierre Van Hooijdonk, the Dutch player most likely to score in a shoot-out, on the bench.

'Rijkaard had the chance to do something decisive against Italy, but let it slip'

Minutes after the match Rijkaard resigned, saying: "My aim was for Holland to become European champions. I didn't achieve my goal, so I must accept the consequences."

But the general feeling was that he jumped to conclusions too quickly. Being new on the scene, why did he set his goal so high? Many thought that it was still possible for Rijkaard to continue until the 2002 World Cup, but the truth is that Rijkaard had decided a long time ago that he would leave after Euro 2000. Like so many national team coaches he preferred working with players on a daily basis, instead of once a month.

Rijkaard wasn't well supported by the Dutch FA either. Talks about extending his contract were continually postponed, which was hardly a good sign. First there were to be negotiations after the first round, and later a new date was set for after the tournament. It proved to be too late.

His successor is hardly a surprise. During Rijkaard's reign Louis Van Gaal made no secret of the biggest ambition in his coaching career. Although he was planning a sabbatical year after the hectic pace of life in Barcelona, he knew that this would be the perfect moment to step in. "I'll grab this chance with both hands. That's why I'm a happy man now," he said on his appointment.

Van Gaal signed a contract until the World Cup in 2006 and is in full control of the national set-up at all levels. It will be interesting to see how he copes with being unable to train with his players very often, though he has time enough to build a team that can win in 2006.

"I've got two chances to win the World Cup. It's the only title I haven't won. Wouldn't it be nice if I and Holland could succeed?" he said.

Over to you, Louis.

New challenge...Louis Van Gaal

Death of the playmaker

The tournament marked the end of an era for a generation of key East Europeans. John Dobson and Ian Griffiths report

Off for ever...Hagi sees red in his last competitive international

EURO 2000 brought to an end two great international careers in rather ignominious circumstances. Romania captain, Gheorghe Hagi, retired with a few words to camera after being dismissed for a second bookable offence against Italy; while Yugoslavia's Dragan Stojkovic ambled off during his team's 6-1 demolition by the Dutch.

With their departure comes the end of an era for great Eastern European creative players, including Hristo Stoichkov and Zbigniew Boniek, whose control on the pitch was mirrored by their influence off it.

At France 98 and Euro 2000, players such as Zinedine Zidane were hugely effective, but their role was complementary to the team ethic, rather than controlling. This was in stark contrast to the outdated, individualistic systems deployed by sides such as Romania, Yugoslavia and Bulgaria.

In Romania, Hagi's playmaker role evolved to make him the pivotal influence in the team, with almost all creative moves, often sometimes unnecessarily, channelled through him. Inevitably he was appointed captain, and he exerted a strong influence on all team affairs.

Simon Evans, who observed the career of these players in Eastern Europe for Reuters, explains how this power came about. "Hagi was the first Romanian football superstar. In Romania, then as now, the other players are not in the same spotlight. He has a status in Romania similar to that of Puskas in Hungary."

Hagi, Stojkovic and another great Balkan player, Stoichkov, spent many years building their reputation in their own country before moving abroad. "These players emerged in the communist system," explains Evans. "The state had the power to keep them in domestic football until they were older. When they went abroad they were more mature. Stoichkov, for example, could handle life in Spain."

This germination period at home also gave them an identity with their country, which was reciprocated by the population. Through times of oppression these players offered escapism and a symbol of hope. In the rampant westernisation that followed the demise of communism, these footballers rekindled national pride.

The readiness of the new generation of young talent, such as Romanian Adrian Mutu, to leave their homeland means there is little chance of them being revered in the same way. "Mutu was only 19 when he moved to Inter; he had no chance of making the first team. So he goes to Verona, and in some people's eyes he is already on the way down," says Evans.

'There is little chance of the new generation of young talent being revered as Hagi and Stojkovic were'

While Hagi and Stoichkov won plaudits at USA 94, Stojkovic was prevented from displaying his skills by the ban that excluded Yugoslavia from Euro 92 until after Euro 96. When eventually Stojkovic emerged in France 98 he was in his thirties and his skills were on the wane.

Although the Yugoslav's time with Nagoya Grampus Eight in Japan made him a less powerful figure than Hagi, he emerged from seemingly international obscurity to captain his country at Euro 2000. The psyche of many in Yugoslavia's team affairs seems to be that an hour with an ageing Stojkovic is better than leaving him out altogether. It has subsequently emerged that Stojkovic will take the reins as national coach either in December or next June.

The issue now facing Romania and Yugoslavia is whether they will suffer the fate that befell Bulgaria and Poland after the demise of their main playmakers? One school of thought suggests it might not be a bad thing to have to survive without them. For one thing, the younger players will have a chance to express themselves. For another, the position of playmaker is no longer as crucial. Now midfielders are asked to push on or they play off the front two.

Closing down...Stojkovic at Euro 2000

The demise of the free-role playmaker and the fact that economic conditions see players leave their homelands at an earlier age means that it is unlikely, at least in Europe, that there will ever again be the figures who are allowed to build such an empire.

Stojkovic, Hagi and Stoichkov were a product of the systems they were brought up in, but they all gained their power by being outstanding players. In an age of greater football rationality there may not be room for their enigmatic, erratic genius.

However, even if their countries prosper, football will undoubtedly be much the poorer for it.

INTERNATIONALS

Thursday, May 4

May 4 - Praia, Cape Verde - Amilcar Cabral Trophy
Cape Verde Islands 1 (Bobs 20)
Gambia 1 (Baye Umar Samba 11)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 2,000

Friday, May 5

May 5 - Mindelo, Cape Verde - Amilcar Cabral Trophy
Guinea 3 (Cisse 62, Sambegou 72, Sylla 81)
Mali 1 (Diallo 17)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 2,500

May 5 - Mindelo, Cape Verde - Amilcar Cabral Trophy
Guinea-Bissau 1 (S Camara 71)
Mauritius 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 2,500

Sunday, May 7

May 7 - St John's - WC qual
Antigua & Barbuda 2 (Gregory 20, 64)
St Vincent & The Grenadines 1 (Phillip og 68)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 5,000

May 7 - Havana - WC qual
Cuba 1 (More 45)
Barbados 1 (Alexander 18)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 2,000

May 7 - San Salvador - WC qual
El Salvador 1 (Diaz Arce 45)
Guatemala 1 (Plata 20)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 13,000

May 7 - Mindelo, Cape Verde - Amilcar Cabral Trophy
Guinea 1 (Sylla 26)
Mauritius 1 (Bamba 90)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 4,000

May 7 - Tegucigalpa - WC qual
Honduras 3 (Pavon 38, 68, Nunez 70)
Panama 1 (Jorge Dely Valdes 48)
HT: 1-0
Sent off: Lozada (Panama) 22min.

May 7 - Mindelo, Cape Verde - Amilcar Cabral Trophy
Mali 3 (Diawara 21, Drisse 61, Konate 85)
Guinea-Bissau 2 (Mando pen 16, 87)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 4,000

May 7 - Port of Spain - WC qual
Trinidad & Tobago 3 (Andrews 34, Dwarika pen 75, Yorke 76)
Haiti 1 (Pierre 90)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 18,000

Sunday, May 14

May 14 - Harare - Cosafa Castle Cup, quarter-final
Zimbabwe 3 (Petros 67, 76, Mugeyi 68)
Namibia 2 (Benjamin 79, Nauseb 89)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 15,000. **Ref:** Massango (Moz)
Zimbabwe: Mugadza - Dinha, Maringwa, Wafawanaka (Masiku 46), Pasuwa - Chikoya, Mugeyi, Sibanda, Ncube - Bunjira, Petros (Chuma 81).
Namibia: Thlabanelo - Doeseb, Tom, Njambari, Ouseb - Nauseb, Uutoni, Jacobs, Benjamin - Shivute (Shipanga 81), Van Wyk (Hummel 65).

Friday, May 19

May 19 - Port-au-Prince - WC qual
Haiti 1 (Delamour 73)
Trinidad & Tobago 1 (Yorke 24)
HT: 0-1
Trinidad & Tobago 4-2 on agg

Saturday, May 20

May 20 - Tegucigalpa, Honduras - WC qual
Guatemala 0
Belize 0

May 20 - Blantyre - Cosafa Castle Cup, quarter-final
Malawi 0
Angola 0
Aet. Malawi 5-4 on pens
Malawi: Sanudi - Mabedi, Mponda, Mwase - MacDonald Yobe, Somanje, M Kumanga (Chimera 83), Musku, Maduka (Mpinganjira 72) - J Nkhawazi (Kanyenda 83), Chitsulo.
Angola: Cuca - Bodunha, Helder Vicente, A Neto, Jacinto (Renato 27) - Kata, Asha, Joni, Paulao (Vitor Covilha 70) - Issac, Tubia (Miro 69).

Sunday, May 21

May 21 - Bridgetown - WC qual
Barbados 1 (Cruzata og 75)
Cuba 1 (More 74)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 9,000
Agg 2-2. Barbados 5-4 on pens

May 21 - Beirut - friendly
Libya 0
Saudi Arabia 0
Att: 26,000

May 21 - Panama City - WC qual
Panama 4 (Julio Dely Valdes, Jorge Dely Valdes, Diaz, Brown)
Nicaragua 0

May 21 - Saint Vincent - WC qual
St Vincent & The Grenadines 4 (John 11, Charles 50, Guy 56, 61)
Antigua & Barbuda 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 4,000
St Vincent 5-2 on agg

Tuesday, May 23

May 23 - Cardiff - friendly
Wales 0
Brazil 3 (Elber 63, Cafu 70, Rivaldo 73)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 72,233. **Ref:** Melo Pereira (Por)
Wales: Freestone - Delaney, Page, Melville, G Roberts - M Jones (Bellamy 75), Savage (A Johnson 75), Speed, J Robinson - I Roberts, Saunders (Barnard 84).
Brazil: Dida - Cafu (Marcos Assuncao 84), Antonio Carlos, Aldair (Carvalho 84), Silvinho - Emerson, Cesar Sampaio, Ze Roberto, Rivaldo (Evanilson 84) - Franca, Elber (Denilson 71).

Wednesday, May 24

May 24 - Bratislava - friendly
Slovakia 1 (Kozuch 37)
Saudi Arabia 1 (Al-Temyat 12)
HT: 1-1

Thursday, May 25

May 25 - Beijing - friendly
China 0
Yugoslavia 2 (Kezman 22, Kovacevic 75)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 20,000

Friday, May 26

May 26 - Algiers - friendly
Algeria 2 (Boukessaffa 74, Madoui 84)
Burkina Faso 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 8,000

Saturday, May 27

May 27 - East Rutherford, USA - friendly
Colombia 3 (Castillo 30, Viveros 74, Hurtado 90)
Jamaica 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 41,609
Colombia: Henao, G Martinez, Ortegon (Alex Fernandez 78), Ivan Cordoba, Bedoya, Dinas, Luis Garcia (Vivedos 46), Oviedo, Candelo (Hurtado 80), Castillo (Quintana 86), Valenciano (Carlos Castro 63).
Jamaica: Lawrence, Dixon, Sinclair (Lowe 46), Stewart (Kevin Deerr 46), Green, Dawes, Scarlett, Griffiths, Hue, Lamey (Richard 38), McDonald (Goodison 46).

May 27 - Wembley - friendly
England 1 (Owen 38)
Brazil 1 (Franca 45)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 73,956. **Ref:** Wojcik (Pol)
England: Seaman, G Neville, Campbell, Keown, P Neville, Beckham, Ince (Parlour 60; Barmby 90), Scholes, Wise, Shearer (Fowler 84), Owen (Phillips 84).
Brazil: Dida, Cafu, Antonio Carlos (Carvalho 81), Aldair, Silvinho (Roberto Carlos 60), Cesar Sampaio, Ze Roberto, Emerson, Rivaldo, Marcio Amoroso (Denilson 68), Franca.

May 27 - Amsterdam - friendly
Holland 2 (Overmars 43, Kluivert 68)
Romania 1 (Moldovan 71)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 30,000. **Ref:** Hauge (Nor)
Holland: Van der Sar, Ooijer, Stam (Konterman 46), F De Boer, Zenden, Seedorf, Winter, Cocu, Overmars (Van Vossen 89), Bergkamp (Makaay 71), Kluivert (Van Hooijdonk 82).
Romania: Lobont, Filipescu (Contra 58), Popescu, Ciobotariu, Chivu, Hagi, Petrescu (D Munteanu 46), Lincar, Maldarasanu (Petre 70), Mutu, Moldovan (Ganea 74).

May 27 - Oslo - friendly
Norway 2 (Solskjaer pen 21, Iversen 85)
Slovakia 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 16,518. **Ref:** Johansson (Swe)
Norway: Myhre (F Olsen 46), Heggem (Riseth 66), H Berg, Bragstad, Bergdolmo, Mykland (Iversen 66), Solbakken (Rekdal 90), E Bakke (Strand 58), Solskjaer, T A Flo, Carew (Riise 77).
Slovakia: Susko, Karhan, Valachovic, Varga, Leitner, Slovak (Pinte 90), Dzurik (S Nemeth 85), Dubovsky, Moravcik (Ujlaky 33), Timko, Kozuch (Fabus 72).

Sunday, May 28

May 28 - Valletta - friendly
Malta 0
South Africa 1 (Mngomeni 89)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 1,500
Malta: Barry, Theuma, Carabott, Dimech, Debono, Buttigieg, Busuttil (Holland 78), Turner (Azzopardi 88), J Brincat, Nwoko (G Agius 46), Mifsud.
South Africa: Arendse, Nzama, Sixaba, Rabutla, Lekgetho, Mkhalele, Zwane, Mngomeni, Ngobe (Issa 81), Buckley (Sapula 63), Mayo.

May 28 - Seoul - friendly
South Korea Olympic XI 0
Yugoslavia 0
Att: 40,000

Tuesday, May 30

May 30 - Dublin - friendly
Rep Ireland 1 (Kennedy 2)
Scotland 2 (Hutchison 16, Ferguson 29)
HT: 1-2. **Att:** 30,200. **Ref:** Melo Pereira (Por)
Rep Ireland: Kelly - Carr, Breen (Dunne 77), Babb, Kilbane - McAteer, Finnan, McPhail (Phelan 61), Kennedy (Duff 61) - N Quinn (Foley 77), Robbie Keane.
Scotland: Sullivan - O'Neil, Elliott, Dailly - Burley, B Ferguson (Cameron 84), Lambert (Johnston 75), Naysmith (Durrant 89), McCann (Pressley 90) - Hutchison, Dodds (Gallacher 46).

May 30 - Seoul - friendly
South Korea Olympic XI 0
Yugoslavia 0
Att: 32,000

Wednesday, May 31

May 31 - Wembley - friendly
England 2 (Fowler 43, Adams 75)
Ukraine 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 55,965. **Ref:** Michel (Slk)
England: Martyn - Adams, Southgate, Campbell, P Neville (Barry 74) - Beckham, Gerrard (Dyer 82), Scholes (Barmby 74), McManaman - Shearer, Fowler (Heskey 46).
Ukraine: Kemozenko (Levytskiy 85) - Luzhnyi, Tomichyouk, Holovko, Vaschuk, Dmytrulin - Popov (Vorobei 71), Husin - Kandaurov (Moroz 64), Shevchenko, Rebrov.

May 31 - Gyor - friendly
Hungary 2 (F Horvath 18, 80)
Saudi Arabia 2 (Mechal 89, Al-Jaber 90)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 5,000. **Ref:** Kos (Slv)
Hungary: Kiraly - V Sebok, Dragoner, Hrutka, Feher (G Korsos 76) - Peto, Dardai, Lendvai, Lisztes - F Horvath, Preisinger (M Feher 66).
Saudi Arabia: Ed-Daiyah - Al-Kheliwi, Zebermaoui, Al-Doukhi - Nour, Al-Ghamdi, S Al-Dossari (Al-Shelhoub 67), Al-Tamyat (Al-Mouwalid 46), Mechal - Al-Jaber, O Al-Dossari (Al-Shlia 74).

May 31 - Moscow - friendly
Russia 1 (Beschastnykh 60)
Slovakia 1 (Fabus 24)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 11,000

Friday, June 2

June 2 - Chaves - friendly
Portugal 3 (Figo 21, Sa Pinto 44, Capucho 66)
Wales 0
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 8,000. **Ref:** De Bleeckere (Blg)
Portugal: Vitor Baia - Dimas (Rui Jorge 68), Fernando Couto, Jorge Costa, Secretario (Da Costa 59) - Paulo Bento, Vidigal (Sergio Conceicao 46), Rui Costa, Sa Pinto (Nuno Gomes 62) - Joao Pinto (Pauleta 78), Figo (Capucho 59).
Wales: Ward - Delaney, Page, Neville, Robinson - Barnard, M Jones, Speed (A Johnson 32), G Roberts (Weston 83) - Bellamy, I Roberts.

Saturday, June 3

June 3 - Copehagen - friendly
Denmark 2 (Tomasson 37, Schmeichel pen 60)
Belgium 2 (Staelens pen 51, Wilmots 71)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 27,000. **Ref:** Krug (Ger)
Denmark: Schmeichel - Colding, Laursen (Schjonberg 79), Henriksen, Heintze - Bisgaard (Goldbaek 79), Steen Nielsen (Tofting 34), A Nielsen, Gronkjaer - Sand (Molnar 46), Tomasson (Gravesen 46).
Belgium: De Wilde (De Vlieger 28) - Deflandre (Hendrickx 46), Valgaeren, Staelens, Leonard (Van Kerckhoven 46) - Verheyen (J Peeters 85), Vanderhaeghe, Wilmots, Goor - Strupar (Nilis 61), E Mpenza (De Bilde 85).

June 3 - Nuremberg - friendly
Germany 3 (Jancker 38, Bierhoff pen 62, 90)
Czech Republic 2 (Kuka 54, Berger 80)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 30,000. **Ref:** Trentalange (Ita)
Germany: Kahn - Nowotny (Rehmer 78), Ramelow, Linke - Babbel (Deisler 46), Hamann (Ballack 53), Ziege, Scholl (Bode 46), Hassler (Wosz 57) - Jancker (Bierhoff 57), Rink.
Czech Rep: Srnicek - Repka, Fukal, Rada - Poborsky (Latal 60), Nemec (Berger 79), Nedved (Rosicky 66), Gabriel, Bejbl (Horvath 54) - Smicer (Kuka 50), Koller (Lokvenc 74).

June 3 - San Pedro Sula - WC qual
Honduras 4 (Nunez 31, Francisco Pavon 40, Carlos Pavon 75, Caballero 88)
Haiti 0
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 12,000

June 3 - Hong Kong - friendly
Hong Kong Selection 4 (Gavrilovic 10, 25, Cheng Siu-chung 26, Lee Wai-tik 70)
Yugoslavia 2 (Kezman 65, Mihajlovic 90)
HT: 3-0

June 3 - Budapest - friendly
Hungary 2 (Lisztes 46, F Horvath 51)
Israel 1 (Balili 90)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 4,000. **Ref:** Ciric (Cro)
Hungary: Kiraly - Hrutka, Dragoner, Sebok - Cs Feher (Korsos 65), Lendvai (Lisztes 46), Halmai, Hamar (Salamon 90) - Illes - F Horvath (Preisinger 90), M Feher (Egressy 79).
Israel: R Cohen - Talker (Bashar 46), Keissi, Shelach, Benado - Almosnino (Badir 54), Telasnikov (Ben Dayan 79), Nimny, A Tikva (Balili 79) - Berkovic, Katan.

June 3 - Riga - friendly
Latvia 1 (Pelcis 59)
Finland 0

June 3 - Valletta - friendly
Malta 1 (Wright og 29)
England 2 (Keown 22, Heskey 75)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 17,000. **Ref:** Braschi (Ita)
Malta: Barry (Muscat 90) - Said (Dimech 78), Spiteri (Okonkwo 78), Vella (Theuma 41), Debono (Camilleri 34) - Buttigieg (Chetcuti 55) - Busuttil (Nwoko 46), Carabott (Ciantar 90), Turner (Veselji 87) - Brincat (Holland 83), G Agius (Mallia 60).
England: Wright - G Neville, Campbell, Keown (Southgate 59), P Neville - Beckham (Barry 80), Wise (Ince 69), Scholes (McManaman 69), Barmby - Phillips (Fowler 59), Shearer (Heskey 51).

June 3 - Oslo - friendly
Norway 1 (Carew 53)
Italy 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 25,000. **Ref:** Barber (Eng)
Norway: Myhre - Heggem (Bjornebye 68), Bragstad, Eggen (T Andersen 60), Bergdolmo - Mykland, E Bakke (Strand 66), Skammelsrud, Solskjaer - Carew (Riise 90), T A Flo (Riseth 80).
Italy: Buffon (Toldo 56) - Cannavaro (Ferrara 77), Nesta (Iuliano 87), Maldini, Pessotto - Albertini, Conte (Ambrosini 28), Zambrotta, Fiore (Del Piero 46) - Totti, F Inzaghi (Montella 77).

June 3 - Asuncion - WC qual
Paraguay 3 (Toledo 10, Brizuela 42, 64)
Ecuador 1 (Graziani 85)
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 13,000

June 3 - Bucharest - friendly

Romania 2 (Ciobotariu 8, Petre 80)
Greece 1 (Limberopoulos 85)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 13,000. **Ref:** Salomir
Romania: Lobont (Prunea 83) - Petrescu, Ciobotariu (Belodedici 82), Filipescu, Galca (Haldan 62) - Gh Popescu, Mutu (Petre 66), D Munteanu (Chivu 76), Ilie (Rosu 68) - Lupescu, Ganea (Moldovan 46).
Greece: Eleftheropoulos - Mavrogenidis (Venetidis 83), Georgatos, Dabizas (Goumas 76), Ouzounidis - Poursanidis (Basinas 67), Georgiadis, Amanatidis, Limberopoulos, Tsartas (Niniadis 46), Nalitzis (Kyparissis 61).

June 3 - Ljubljana - friendly
Slovenia 2 (Zahovic 16, Acimovic 46)
Saudi Arabia 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 10,000. **Ref:** Trivkovic
Slovenia: Dabanovic (Simeunovic 46) - Galic (Knavs 46), Milanic, Milinovic, Rudonja (Osterc 71) - Novak (Gajser 75), Pavlin (Pavlovic 57), Ceh, Zahovic - Udovic (Acimovic 46), Siljak (Karic 46).
Saudi Arabia: Al-Antaif - Al-Jahani, Sulaiman, Al-Sagri (O Al-Dossari 86), Al-Otaibl (Al-Jaber 62) - Al-Shelboub (Al-Dossari 62), K Al-Dossari (Howsani 75), A Al-Dossari, Al-Shahrani (Al-Ghandi 66) - Al-Yami (Al-Meshal 62), Al-Shehri.

June 3 - Gothenburg - friendly
Sweden 1 (Nilsson pen 75)
Spain 1 (Guardiola pen 43)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 35,215. **Ref:** Treossi (Ita)
Sweden: Hedman - Nilsson (Gustafsson 90), P Andersson, Bjorklund, Sundgren (Mellberg 46) - Alexandersson (Mild 68), Mjallby, D Andersson, Ljungberg - Pettersson (Larsson 66), K Andersson (Osmanovski 66).
Spain: Molina (Casillas 64) - Michel Salgado, Paco, Hierro (Ivan Helguera 46), Aranzabal - Etxeberria (Mendieta 46), Guardiola, Valeron (Gerard 46), Fran (Sergi 46) - Alfonso (Engonga 46), Urzaiz (Munitis 46).

June 3 - Washington - US Cup
United States 4 (Jones 36, 43, Reyna 55, Stewart 68)
South Africa 0
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 25,000

June 3 - Montevideo - WC qual
Uruguay 2 (D Silva 35, Montero 41)
Chile 1 (Zamorano pen 39)
HT: 2-1. **Att:** 60,000
Uruguay: Carini - Mendez, Lembo, Montero, Rodriguez - Pablo Garcia, Guigou, O'Neill, Olivera - Recoba (Giacomazzi 89), D Silva (Alonso 81).
Chile: Tapia - Rojas, Vargas, Reyes, Olarra (Rozental 68) - Galdames, Estay (Nunez 87), Villaseca, Tello - Zamorano, Salas.

Sunday, June 4

June 4 - Buenos Aires - WC qual
Argentina 1 (Gustavo Lopez 83)
Bolivia 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 50,669. **Ref:** Rezende
Argentina: Bonano - Sensini, Ayala, Samuel - Zanetti (Gustavo Lopez 71), Simeone, C Gonzalez, Veron - Ortega (Aimar 83), Batistuta, Claudio Lopez (Almeyda 83).
Bolivia: Fernandez - Carballo, Pena, Sandy, I Castillo - Ribera, Baldivieso, Crisaldo, Etcheverry (Galindo 78) - Suarez (Garcia 65), Botero (Coimbra 83).

June 4 - Baku - friendly
Azerbaijan 0
Georgia 0
Att: 7,000

June 4 - Bogota - WC qual
Colombia 3 (Viveros 27, I Cordoba pen 42, Valenciano 88)
Venezuela 0
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 22,000
Colombia: O Cordoba - G Martinez, I Cordoba, Ortegon, Bedoya - Rincon, Bolano, Oviedo (Candelo 70), Viveros (Dinas 77) - Angel, Jairo Castillo (Valenciano 81).
Venezuela: Dudamel - Filosa, J Gonzalez, Alvarado, Echenausi - Arango, Vera (Farias 55), Mea, Bidoglio (De Ornelas 67) - Castellin (Savaresse 52), Moran.

June 4 - Havana - WC qual
Cuba 0
Canada 1 (De Vos 40)
HT: 0-1

June 4 - Tallinn - friendly
Estonia 2 (Oper 4, 82)
Belarus 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 550

June 4 - Casablanca - King Hassan II tnmt
France 2 (Zidane 63, Djorkaeff 76)
Japan 2 (Morishima 34, Nishizawa 73)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 40,000. **Ref:** El-Arjoun (Mor)
France 4-2 on pens

June 4 - Lausanne - friendly
Holland 3 (F De Boer 29, Kluivert 56, 61)
Poland 1 (Kryszalowicz 38)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 7,500. **Ref:** Tavel (Swi)
Holland: Van der Sar - Reiziger, Stam, F De Boer, Van Bronckhorst - Winter (Davids 46), Seedorf (Bosvelt 76), Cocu - Bergkamp (R De Boer 46), Kluivert (Van Hooijdonk 62), Zenden (Van Vossen 46).
Poland: Dudek - Bak, Murawski (Zdebel 66), Waldoch, Klos (Zielinski 76), Mi Zewlakow - Iwan, Swierczewski (Pawlak 86), Rzasa (Kielbowicz 79) - Kryszalowicz (Frankowski 82), Ma Zewlakow (Gilewicz 46).

June 4 - Chicago - US Cup
Mexico 2 (Osorno 38, Sanchez 54)
Rep Ireland 2 (Dunne 60, Foley 71)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 20,000

June 4 - Chisinau - friendly
Moldova 0
Russia 1 (Buznikin 15)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 14,000. **Ref:** Abraham
Moldova: Hmaruc - Covalenco, Sosnovschi, Testimitanu, Rebeja (Popescu 69) - Ossipenco (Gaidamasciuc 50), Curtianu, Oprea, Sishkin (Catansus 46), Epureanu (Rogaciov 78) - Clescenco.
Russia: Nigmatulin - Khlestov, Bulatov (Khokhlov 54), Nizhegorodov, Gusev - Bushmanov, Onopko (Drozdov 59), Titov, Tikhonov (Lossikov 75) - Beschastnykh (Semak 54), Buznikin.

June 4 - Casablanca - King Hassan II tnmt
Morocco 1 (Zerouali 61)
Jamaica 0
HT: 0-0

June 4 - Kano - friendly
Nigeria 3 (Shuaibu 32, Jasper 36, Issah 46)
Malawi 2 (Chitsulo 64, 90)
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 20,000

June 4 - Lima - WC qual
Peru 0
Brazil 1 (Antonio Carlos 35)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 45,000. **Ref:** Gimenez (Arg)
Peru: Miranda - Soto, Pajuelo, Olivares, Rebosio - Palacios, Del Solar, Jayo (Serrano 49), Zuniga - Holsen (Ciurlizza 46), Huaman (Maldonado 46).
Brazil: Dida - Cafu, Aldair, Antonio Carlos, Roberto Carlos - Cesar Sampaio, Emerson Ferreira, Alex (Denilson 65), Rivaldo (Vampeta 90) - Edmundo, Franca (Ze Roberto 77). *Sent off: Edmundo 88min.*

Tuesday, June 6

June 6 - Casablanca - King Hassan II tnmt
Japan 4 (Jo 47, 60, Atsuhiro 66, Kazuyoshi 80)
Jamaica 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 10,000. **Ref:** Bekaye (Mli)

June 6 - Casablanca - King Hassan II tnmt
Morocco 1 (El Kharkouri 66)
France 5 (Henry 26, Djorkaeff pen 55, Dugarry 75, Anelka 84, Wiltord 90)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 55,000. **Ref:** Boujsim (UAE)

June 6 - Port Harcourt - friendly
Nigeria 4 (Skinn 40, Adamu 50, Gasper 73, Shuaibu 90)
Malawi 1 (Nkwazi)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 8,000

June 6 - Foxboro - US Cup
United States 1 (Razov 68)
Rep Ireland 1 (Foley 31)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 26,500

Wednesday, June 7

June 7 - Freiburg - friendly
Germany 8 (Bierhoff 1, Scholl 31, Bode 65, Kirsten 80, 81, 86, Jancker 84, 88)
Liechtenstein 2 (Ma Stocklasa 17, M Frick 56)
HT: 2-1. **Att:** 25,000. **Ref:** Plautz (Aut)
Germany: Lehmann (Butt 46) - Babbel (Deisler 46), Linke (Rehmer 46), Matthaus (Ramelow 30), Nowotny - Jeremies (Ballack 46), Hamann (Hassler 46), Ziege (Bode 46) - Scholl (Wosz 46), Bierhoff (Jancker 46), Rink (Kirsten 46).
Liechtenstein: Jehle - Hefti, Zech, Hasler, Ospelt - Ma Stocklasa, Telser, Ch Frick, Gigon (Ritter 79) - T Beck (R Buchel 70; Bicker 90), M Frick.

June 7 - Luxembourg - friendly
Luxembourg 0
Spain 1 (Mendieta 3)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 6,000. **Ref:** Fandel (Ger)
Luxembourg: Besic - Vanek, Schauls, Ferron, Strasser - Saibene, L Deville, Holtz (Peters 89), Cardoni - Christophe (Zaritski 73), Schneider.
Spain: Canizares (Casillas 60) - Velasco, Abelardo, Ivan Helguera, Sergi (Aranzabal 78) - Engonga, Fran (Gerard 60), Mendieta (Hierro 60), Valeron (Etxeberria 60) - Munitis, Alfonso.

June 7 - Dakar - friendly
Senegal 0
Zambia 0
Att: 4,000

Friday, June 9

June 9 - Sydney - friendly
Australia 0
Paraguay 0
Att: 10,000

Saturday, June 10

June 10 - Bangkok - friendly
Thailand 2 (Suksomkij 52, Srimaka 90)
Qatar 3 (Salih 5, Jadua 25, Hassan 58)
HT: 0-2. **Att:** 9,000

Sunday, June 11

June 11 - St John's - WC qual
Antigua & Barbuda 0
Guatemala 1 (Ramirez 32)
HT: 0-1

June 11 - Winnipeg - WC qual
Canada 0
Cuba 0
Ref: Rodriguez (ElS)
Canada 1-0 on agg

June 11 - Pamu - friendly
Estonia 1 (Tiiroja 17)
Georgia 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 450

June 11 - Miyagi - Kirin Cup
Japan 1 (Nakamura 9)
Slovakia 1 (Dzurik 7)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 45,831. **Ref:** Kim (SKo)
Japan: Narazaki - Oiwa, Morioka, Matsuda - Morishima, A Miura, Ito, Oku (Kubo 85), S Nakamura (Nakanishi 73), Inamoto - Nishizawa (Yanagisawa 88).
Slovakia: Susko - Pecko (Pinte 56), Dzurik, S Varga, Timko, Leitner - Valachovic, Balis, P Nemeth, Jezik (Pancik 81; Zatek 90) - Kozuch (Fabus 90).

June 11 - Maseru - Cosafa Castle Cup, quarter-final
Lesotho 0
Zambia 0
Aet. **Att:** 6,000. **Ref:** Milangeni (Swa)
Lesotho 3-1 on pens
Lesotho: Thite - Marai, Hlojeng, Makara, Seema - Maseela, Pheko, Nthonyana (Makhele 46), Mohapi - Ntsonyana (Mashupa 73), Mphongaoa (Shale 34).
Zambia: Mbulo - Mwewa, Tana, Musabula, Chilembi - Sinkala, Mwanza, Kampamba (Kumwenda 80), Zulu (Nsofwa 67) - Lota, Milanzi.

June 11 - East Rutherford - US Cup
Rep Ireland 2 (McPhail 43, N Quinn 69)
South Africa 1 (B McCarthy 14)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 45,008
Rep Ireland: Given - Carr, Phelan, Babb, Breen - McAteer (M Kennedy 45), Holland, McPhail (B Quinn 86), Foley (Robbie Keane 46) - Mahon (Kilbane 42), N Quinn (Doherty 76).
South Africa: Arendse - Nzama, Rabutla, Lekgetho - Mkhalele (Mngomeni 76), Ngobe (Mayo 46), Mokoena, Fortune (Zwane 76) - Buckley (Sapula 46), McCarthy (Sheppard 46), Bartlett.

June 11 - East Rutherford - US Cup
United States 3 (McBride 33, Hejduk 79, Razov 85)
Mexico 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 45,008. **Ref:** Prendergast (Jam)
United States: Keller - Agoos, Llamosa (Berhalter 71), Regis - O'Brien (Sosen 64), Reyna, Armas, Sanneh - E Stewart (Hejduk 76), McBride (Razov 81), C Jones (Kirovski 84).
Mexico: Bernal - Beltran, C Ramirez, Alpizar, I Lopez - Torrado, Luis Perez (Ignacio Gonzalez 66), Chavez (Carino 86), Horacio Sanchez (Lozano 46) - Osorno (Flores 77), Olade.

Monday, June 12

June 12 - Brisbane - friendly
Australia 0
Paraguay 0

Wednesday, June 14

June 14 - Tosu, Japan - Kirin Cup
Slovakia 2 (Kratochvil 21, Fabus 47)
Bolivia 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 8,023. **Ref:** Okada (Jap)
Slovakia: Susko - Dzurik (Zatek 65), S Varga, Timko, Kratochvil, Leitner - Valachovic (Hadviger 82), Balis (Jezik 92), P Nemeth - Pinte, Fabus (Kozuch 75).
Bolivia: Galarza - Paraba, Ribera, Loayza, L Camacho - Rivero (Torrico 46), M Ramos, Christaldo (Justiniano 46), R Rojas - L Gutierrez (R Gutierrez 46), T Gutierrez (H Sanchez 46).

Thursday, June 15

June 15 - Melbourne - friendly
Australia 2 (Foster 47, Zdrilic 53)
Paraguay 1 (Caceres 58)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 7,500
Sent off: Chilavert (Paraguay).

Friday, June 16

June 16 - Annaba - WC qual
Algeria 1 (R Saifi pen 27)
Senegal 1 (S Diop 16)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 60,000. **Ref:** Sidi Magassa (Mli)
Algeria: Mezair - Slatni (Mezouar 65), Haddou, Amrouche (Benhamlat 80), Meftah - Belbey, Kraouche, Boukessassa, Bourahli - Saifi, Moussouni (Madoui 42).
Senegal: Diallo - Daf, Ba, Coly, Ndiamby - Diop, Fall, Silido, Diop, Fadiga - Diouf, H Camara.

Saturday, June 17

June 17 - Cairo - friendly
Egypt 2 (Latil 9, Hosni 90)
Ghana 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 23,000

June 17 - Guatemala City - WC qual
Guatemala 8 (Valencia 17, Ruiz 31, Ramirez 34, Plata 37, 80, Funes 72, Garcia 83, 87)
Antigua & Barbuda 1 (Blean 60)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 24,750
Guatemala 9-1 on agg

June 17 - Port-au-Prince - WC qual
Haiti 1 (Princime 59)
Honduras 3 (Caballero 8, Nunez 58, De Leon 88)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 4,000
Honduras 7-1 on agg

June 17 - Antananarivo - WC qual
Madagascar 3 (Harry 18, 73, Rado pen 51)
DR Congo 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 500

June 17 - Blantyre - WC qual
Malawi 1 (Chitsulo 39)
Burkina Faso 1 (Zongo 29)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 16,000

June 17 - Windhoek - WC qual
Namibia 0
Morocco 0
Att: 5,000

June 17 - Lagos - WC qual
Nigeria 2 (Okocha 15, Akwuegbu 37)
Sierra Leone 0
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 31,000

Sunday, June 18

June 18 - Luanda - WC qual
Angola 2 (Akwa 82, 84)
Zambia 1 (Milanzi 40)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 18,000

June 18 - Conakry - WC qual
Guinea 3 (Drame 33, Titi Camara 50, Youla 60)
Zimbabwe 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 3,500

June 18 - Abidjan - WC qual
Ivory Coast 2 (Bakayoko 44, Kalou 59)
Tunisia 2 (Mhedhebi 12, Godhbane 19)
HT: 1-2. **Att:** 22,000

June 18 - Yokohama - Kirin Cup
Japan 2 (Yanagisawa 7, 34)
Bolivia 0
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 65,073
Japan: Narazaki - Morioka, Matsuda (Miyamoto 46), K Nakata - Mochizuki, A Miura (Motoyama 88), Oku, S Nakamura (Morishima 28), Inamoto - Nishizawa (Takahara 46), Yanagisawa (Kubo 79).
Bolivia: J-C Fernandez - Torrico, Paraba, Ribera, Loayza, L Camacho - R Rojas, R Gutierrez, Justiniano (Calustro 46) - T Gutierrez (Anez 87), H Sanchez (L Gutierrez 46).

June 18 - Tripoli - WC qual
Libya 0
Cameroon 3 (Mboma 26, Foe 30, Eto'o 37)
HT: 0-3. **Att:** 40,000

June 18 - Witbank - Cosafa Castle Cup, quarter-final
South Africa 2 (Buckley 11, 17)
Swaziland 0
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 14,000. **Ref:** Pomare (Les)
South Africa: Tlale - Nzama, Sixaba, Rabutla, Lekgetho - Mngomeni, Mkhalele, Sapula (Ngobe 57), Buckley (Sheppard 28) - Mkhize (Pule 60), Nomvete.
Swaziland: Dube - Ngubane, Masangane, Maseko, Mgonodi, Mkhulusi (Nhlabatsi 67) - Gamedze, Masina (Dlamini 77), Zikalala (Mdluli 46), Dlamini - Zondo.

June 18 - Omdurman - WC qual
Sudan 2 (J Joseph 54, Mujahid 88)
Liberia 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 12,000

Tuesday, June 20

June 20 - Papeete, Tahiti - Oceania Nations Cup, Gp A
Australia 17 (Agostino 18, 53, 68, Muscat 21, pen 45, Tiatto 24, Foster 30, 42, 51, 80, Zdrilic 35, 65, Popovic 60, Corica 70, Zane 82, 87, 89)
Cook Islands 0
HT: 7-0. **Att:** 12,000

June 20 - Papeete, Tahiti - Oceania Nations Cup, Gp B
Tahiti 0
New Zealand 2 (Bouckenooghe 27, C Jackson 78)
HT: 0-1

Wednesday, June 21

June 21 - Panama - friendly
Panama 2 (Angel Rodriguez 36, A Zapata 46)
Venezuela 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 11,000

June 21 - Ciudad del Este - friendly
Paraguay 1 (Paredes 52)
Costa Rica 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 7,500

Thursday, June 22

June 22 - Papeete, Tahiti - Oceania Nations Cup, Gp B
New Zealand 3 (Killen 46, 84, Perry 65)
Vanuatu 1 (Iwai 14)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 8,500

June 22 - Papeete, Tahiti - Oceania Nations Cup, Gp A
Solomon Islands 5 (Suri 33, Menapi 47, Samani 63, Omokirio 74, Kotto 88)
Cook Islands 1 (Shepherd 55)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 800

Friday, June 23

June 23 - Papeete, Tahiti - Oceania Nations Cup, Gp A
Australia 6 (Chipperfield 6, Zane 13, 34, Omokirio og 36, Muscat pen 39, Cardozo 43)
Solomon Islands 0
HT: 6-0. **Att:** 300

June 23 - Papeete, Tahiti - Oceania Nations Cup, Gp B
Tahiti 2 (Rousseau pen 2, Amaru 87)
Vanuatu 3 (Ben 49, Iwai 60, Tura 77)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 1,250

Sunday, June 25

June 25 - Papeete, Tahiti - Oceania Ntns Cup, semi-fnl
Australia 1 (Muscat pen 5)
Vanuatu 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 500

June 25 - Papeete, Tahiti - Oceania Ntns Cup, semi-fnl
New Zealand 2 (Elliott 51, 55)
Solomon Islands 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 500

Wednesday, June 28

June 28 - Rio de Janeiro - WC qual
Brazil 1 (Rivaldo 85)
Uruguay 1 (Dario Silva 5)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 47,715. **Ref:** Ruiz (Col)
Brazil: Dida - Cafu, Antonio Carlos, Aldair, Roberto Carlos - Emerson, Vampeta (Ze Roberto 70), Rivaldo - Ronaldinho (Alex 46), Franca, Savio (Guilherme 46).
Uruguay: Carini - Tais, Lembo, Montero, Dario Rodriguez - Garcia, O'Neil (Giacomazzi 80), Oliveira, Guigou - Recoba (Coelho 58), Dario Silva.

June 28 - San Cristobal - WC qual
Venezuela 4 (Mea Vitali 23, Moran 38, Savarese 61, Tortolero pen 67)
Bolivia 2 (Moreno 49, Baldivieso 59)
HT: 2-0
Venezuela: Angelucci - Jimenez, Gonzalez, Alvarado, Martinez - Farias, Tortolero, Mea Vitali, Urdaneta (Echenausi 90) - Moran, Savarese (Galan 71).
Bolivia: Fernandez - Ribera, Pena, Sandy, I Castillo - Cristaldo, Baldivieso, Etcheverry (Galindo 80), Sanchez - Suarez (Garcia 73), Botero (Moreno 46).

Thursday, June 29

June 29 - Papeete, Tahiti - Oceania Ntns Cup, Final
Australia 2 (Murphy 40, Foster 66)
New Zealand 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 4,250
Australia: Kalac, Muscat, Murphy, Popovic, Tiatto, Lazaridis, Okon, Foster (A Vidmar 80), Emerton, Zdrilic, Agostino (Zane 80).
New Zealand: Batty, Bunce, Douglas, Perry, Wilkinson (De Gregorio 70), Elliott, Killen, Jackson, Atkinson (Urlovic 77), Bouckenooghe, Smith.

June 29 - Santiago - WC qual
Chile 3 (Caniza og 18, Salas 35, Zamorano pen 78)
Paraguay 1 (Cardoso 71)
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 60,000
Chile: Tapia, Fuentes, Rojas, Reyes, Villarroel, Maldonado, Tello, Estay, Nunez (Pizarro 68), Zamorano, Salas.
Paraguay: Chilavert, Caniza, Zelaya, Ayala, Toledo, Quintana, Struway (Gonzalez 46), Paredes, Acuna (Gavilan 37), Santa Cruz (Cardoso 66), Brizuela.

June 29 - Bogota - WC qual
Colombia 1 (Oviedo 27)
Argentina 3 (Batistuta 24, 45, Crespo 75)
HT: 1-2. **Att:** 50,000
Colombia: O Cordoba, I Cordoba, Bermudez, Yepes, Bolano, Oviedo, Rincon, Dinas (Grisales 51; Candelo 85), Viveros, Angel, Castillo (Valenciano 58).
Argentina: Bonano, Sensini, Ayala, Samuel, Zanetti, Simeone, Gonzalez, Veron (Gustavo Lopez 70), Ortega (Sorin 86), Claudio Lopez, Batistuta (Crespo 70).

June 29 - Quito - WC qual
Ecuador 2 (Chala 16, Hurtado 51)
Peru 1 (Pajuelo 76)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 45,000
Ecuador: Cevallos, De la Cruz, I Hurtado, Poroso, Ayovi, Obregon, Blandon, Chala, Aguinaga (Burbano 70), Delgado (Graciani 70), E Hurtado (Kaviedes 74).
Peru: Ibanez, Soto, Rebosio, Pajuelo, Olivares (Zuniga 75), Solano, Del Solar, Jayo (Ciurlizza 75), Serrano (Soria 20), Palacios, Pizarro.

June 29 - Papeete, Tahiti - Oceania Ntns Cup, 3rd pl
Solomon Islands 2 (Menapi 53, Omokirio pen 69)
Vanuatu 1 (Lexa 35)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 4,250

KING HUSSAIN TOURNAMENT

In Amman, Jordan
Group A: Iran 3 Kazakhstan 0; Palestine 0 Syria 1 (Al-Beetar 80); Kazakhstan 0 Syria 4 (Azzam, Al-Boushy, Al-Haj Mustafa, Shuhada); Iran 1 (Akbari) Palestine 1 (Ali Diab); Iran 1 (Karimi 60) Syria 0; Kazakhstan 3 (Kadyrkulov 29, 88, Vencheslav 43) Palestine 2 (Ali Diab 55, Al-Faran 83).
Group B: Jordan 2 (Zamaa pen 28, Chagrane 66) Kyrgyzstan 0; Iraq 2 (Abbas Abid pen 63, Faouzi 66) Libya 1 (Zine 15); Libya 2 (Zein 41, Antar 76) Kyrgyzstan 0; Jordan 0 Iraq 0; Iraq 4 (Musa 28, 35, 75, Fiead 67) Kyrgyzstan 0; Jordan 0 Libya 0.
Semi-finals: Syria 0 Iraq 0 (Iraq 5-3 on pens); Iran 1 Jordan 0.
Third place play-off: Iraq 4 Jordan 1.
Final: Iran 1 Syria 0.

OTHER MATCHES

May 17 (Kingston): Jamaica 0 Romania B 0.
May 19 (San Pedro Sula): Honduras 2 (R Garcia 10, Carcamo 36) Romania B 2 (Turcu 61, Balasa 88).
May 26 (Munich - Matthaus farewell, att 47,000): Bayern Munich 1 (Jancker 10) Germany 1 (Hassler 26).

EUROPEAN U-21 CHAMPIONSHIP FINALS

In Slovakia
Group A: Spain 1 Czech Rep 1; Holland 2 Croatia 1; Czech Rep 3 Holland 1; Spain 0 Croatia 0; Czech Rep 4 Croatia 3; Spain 1 Holland 0. *Points: Czech Rep 7, Spain 5, Holland 3, Croatia 1.*
Group B: Italy 2 England 0; Slovakia 2 Turkey 1; Slovakia 1 Italy 1; England 6 Turkey 0; Italy 3 Turkey 1; Slovakia 2 England 0. Points: Italy 7 (goals plus 4), Slovakia 7 (plus 3), England 3, Turkey 0.
Third place play-off: Spain 1 Slovakia 0.

June 4 - Bratislava - Final
Italy 2 (Pirlo pen 41, 81)
Czech Rep 1 (T Dosek 51)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 10,000. **Ref:** Nilsson (Swe)
Italy: Abbiati - Grandoni, Zanchi, Cirillo - Gattuso, Baronio, Zanetti (Firmani 84), Coco - Pirlo - Comandini (Ventola 73), Spinesi (Vannucchi 90).
Sent off: Coco (90mins).
Czech Rep: Chvalovsky - Lengyel, Petrous, Tyce - L Dosek, Ujfalusi, Jarolim (Grygera 64), Jankulovski (Polak 80) - Sionko (Baros 61), T Dosek, Heinz.

EUROPE

UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

1st qual rnd, 1st legs

July 12
Birkirkara (Mlt) 1 (Nwoko 28)
KR Reykjavik (Ice) 2 (Sigthorsson 46, Juliusson 57)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 2,000

F91 Dudelange (Lux) 0
Levski Sofia (Bul) 4 (G Ivanov 12, 87, Ivankov pen 17, Isykhmeistruk 69)
HT: 0-2. **Att:** 1,200

FC Haka (Fin) 1 (Wilson 55)
Linfield (NI) 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 2,000

KI Klaksvik (Far) 0
Red Star Belgrade (Yug) 3 (Ilic 45, Stevanovic 65, Mirkovic 90)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 1,000

Shirak Gyumri (Arm) 1 (Takmadyan 31)
BATE Borisov (Bls) 1 (Kutuzov 24)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 2,500

Skonto Riga (Lat) 2 (Kolesnicenko 52, pen 90)
Samkir (Aze) 1 (Kulikov 82)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 3,200

Sloga Jugomagnat (Mac) 0
Shelbourne (Ire) 1 (Baker 87)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 8,000

SK Tirana (Alb) 2 (Dede 13, Fortuzi 16)
Zimbru Chisinau (Mol) 3 (Berco 29, 50, Boret 45)
HT: 2-2. **Att:** 4,000

TNS Llansantffraid (Wal) 2 (Wright 58, Toner 89)
Levadia Maardu (Est) 2 (Bragin 51, Krasnopjorov 88)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 1,432

Zalgiris Kaunas (Lit) 4 (Ksanavicius 13, 37, Zuta 19, Tuotkalis 87)
Brotnjo (Bos) 0
HT: 3-0. **Att:** 2,000

1st qual rnd, 2nd legs

July 19
BATE Borisov 2 (Rogozhkin 17, Loshenkov 58)
Shirak Gyumri 1 (Takmazyan 73)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 5,000
BATE 3-2 on agg
Brotnjo 3 (Katic 32, pen 41, Juricic 39)
Zalgiris Kaunas 0
HT: 3-0. **Att:** 6,000
Zalgiris 4-3 on agg

KR Reykjavik 4 (Winnie 11, Benediktsson 45, Sigurdsson 60, Marteisson 66)
Birkirkara 1 (Spiteri 56)
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 2,000
KR 6-2 on agg

Levadia Maardu 4 (Krom 45, Fenin 58, Tselnokov 60, Edwards og 65)
TNS Llansanttfraid 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 550
Levadia Maardu 6-2 on agg

Levski Sofia 2 (G Ivanov 35, Ivankov pen 53)
F91 Dudelange 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 3,000
Levski 6-0 on agg

Linfield 2 (Ferguson pen 21, 74)
FC Haka 1 (Kovac pen 88)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 3,587
Agg 2-2. Haka on away goals

Red Star Belgrade 2 (Boskovic pen 10, Drulic 16)
KI Klaksvik 0
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 10,000
Red Star 5-0 on agg

Samkir 4 (Kvaratskhelia 2, 90, 100, Kulikov 110)
Skonto Riga 1 (Samusevas 30)
Aet. **HT:** 1-1. **90mins:** 2-1. **Att:** 15,000
Samkir 5-3 on agg

Shelbourne 1 (Haylock 67)
Sloga Jugomagnat 1 (Nujiji pen 81)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 8,000
Shelbourne 2-1 on agg

Zimbru Chisinau 3 (Oprya 7, 31, Borets 85)
SK Tirana 2 (Rrezart 10, Kenesei 23)
HT: 2-2. **Att:** 3,500
Zimbru 6-4 on agg

2nd qualifying round draw

Anderlecht (Blg) v Anorthosis (Cyp)
Besiktas (Tur) v Levski Sofia
Brondby (Den) v KR Reykjavik
Dinamo Bucharest (Rom) v Polonia (Pol)
Hajduk Split (Cro) v Dunaferr (Hun)
FC Haka v Inter Bratislava (Slk)
Helsingborgs (Swe) v BATE Borisov
Rangers (Sco) v Zalgiris Kaunas
Red Star Belgrade v Torpedo Kutaisi (Geo)
Shakhtar Donetsk (Ukr) v Levadia Maardu
Shelbourne v Rosenborg (Nor)
Slavia Prague (Cze) v Samkir
Sturm Graz (Aut) v Hapoel Tel Aviv (Isr)
Zimbru Chisinau v Maribor (Slv)

First legs to be played July 26; second legs Aug 2

3nd qualifying round draw

Anderlecht or Anorthosis v FC Porto (Por)
Besiktas or Levski Sofia v Lokomotiv Moscow (Rus)
Brondby or KR v Hamburg (Ger)
Dinamo Bucharest or Polonia v Panathinaikos (Gre)
Hajduk Split or Dunaferr v Shelbourne or Rosenborg
FC Haka or Inter Bratislava v Lyon (Fra)
Herfolge (Den) v Rangers or Zalgiris Kaunas
Internazionale (Ita) v Helsingborgs or BATE Borisov
Kyiv Dynamo (Ukr) v Red Star Belgrade or Torpedo Kutaisi
Leeds (Eng) v 1860 Munich (Ger)
Milan (Ita) v Dinamo Zagreb (Cro)
Shakhtar Donetsk or Levadia Maardu v Slavia Prague or Samkir
St Gallen (Swi) v Galatasaray (Tur)
Sturm Graz or Hapoel Tel Aviv v Feyenoord (Hol)
FC Tirol (Aut) v Valencia (Spa)
Zimbru or Maribor v Sparta Prague (Cze)

First legs to be played Aug 8-9; second legs Aug 22-23

UEFA CUP

Qualifying round draw

AB (Den) v B36 Torshavn (Far)
Aberdeen (Sco) v Bohemians (Ire)
AIK Stockholm (Swe) v Gomel (Bls)
Amica Wronki (Pol) v Vaduz (Lie)
Ararat (Arm) v Kosice (Slk)
Bangor (Wal) v Halmstads (Swe)
Beitar Jerusalem (Isr) v Vit Georgia (Geo)
Boavista (Por) v Barry (Wal)
Club Brugge (Blg) v Flora Tallinn (Est)
Coleraine (Nl) v Orgryte (Swe)
Constellacio (And) v Rayo Vallecano (Spa)
Constructorul (Mol) v CSKA Sofia (Bul)
Ekranas (Lit) v Lierse (Blg)
Folgore (SaM) v Basle (Swi)
Gent (Blg) v IA Akranes (Ice)
Gl Gotu (Far) v Norrkoping (Swe)
Glentoran (Nl) v Lillestrom (Nor)
HJK Helsinki (Fin) v Grevenmacher (Lux)
IBV Vestmannaeyjar (Ice) v Hearts (Sco)
Jeunesse d'Esch (Lux) v Celtic (Sco)
Kapaz (Aze) v Antalyaspor (Tur)
Lausanne (Swi) v Cork City (Ire)
MTK (Hun) v Jokerit (Fin)
Metalurgs Liepaja (Lat) v Brann Bergen (Nor)
Napredak (Yug) v Tulevik Viljandi (Est)
Neftchi (Aze) v HIT Gorica (Slv)
Omonia (Cyp) v Neftohimik (Bul)
Petra Drnovice (Cze) v Buducnost (Bos)
Rapid Bucharest (Rom) v Mika Ashtarak (Arm)
Rapid Wien (Aut) v Teuta (Alb)
Serif Tiraspol (Mol) v Olimpija Ljubljana (Slv)
Slavia Mozyr (Bls) v Maccabi Haifa (Isr)
Sliema Wanderers (Mlt) v Partizan Belgrade (Yug)
Slovan Bratislava (Slk) v Lokomotiv Tbilisi (Geo)
Tomori (Alb) v APOEL (Cyp)
Universitatea Craiova (Rom) v Pobeda (Mac)
Valletta (Mlt) v Rijeka (Cro)
Ventspils (Lat) v Vasas (Hun)
Vorskla (Ukr) v Rabotnicki (Mac)
Zalgiris Vilnius (Lit) v Ruch Chorzow (Pol)
Zeljeznicar (Bos) v Wisla Krakow (Pol)

First legs to be played Aug 10; second legs Aug 24

INTERTOTO CUP

1st round

June 17-18 and June 24-25
Atlantas (Lit) bt Kocaelispor (Tur) 1-0, 0-1 (Agg 1-1. Atlantas 5-3 on pens);
Ceahlaul (Rom) bt Trans Narva (Est) 5-2, 4-2 (9-4 on agg);
Cibalia (Cro) bt Obilic (Yug) 3-1, 1-1 (4-2 on agg);
Dinaburg (Lat) bt Trencin (Slk) 0-0, 1-0 (1-0 on agg);
Dnepr-Transmash (Bls) bt Silkeborg (Den) 2-1, 2-1 (4-2 on agg);
Leiftur (Ice) bt Lucerne (Swi) 2-2, 4-4 (Agg 6-6. Leiftur on away goals);
Linz ASK (Aut) bt Hapoel Petach Tikva (Isr) 2-1, 1-1 (3-2 on agg);
Nea Salamis (Cyp) bt Vllaznia (Alb) 4-1, 2-1 (6-2 on agg);
Neuchatel Xamax (Swi) bt MyPa (Fin) 2-1, 3-3 (5-4 on agg);
Nistru Otaci (Mol) bt Cwmbran Town (Wal) 1-0, 1-0 (2-0 on agg);
Pelister (Mac) bt Hobscheid (Lux) 3-1, 1-0 (4-1 on agg);
Primorje (Slv) bt Westerlo (Blg) 5-0, 6-0 (11-0 on agg);
Sigma Olomouc (Cze) bt Araks (Arm) 2-1, 1-0 (3-1 on agg);
Slaven (Cro) bt Glenavon (Nl) 1-1, 3-0 (4-1 on agg);
Stabaek (Nor) bt Floriana (Mlt) 1-1, 2-0 (3-1 on agg);
Standard Liege (Blg) bt Dinamo Tbilisi (Geo) 2-2, 1-1 (Agg 3-3. Standard on away goals);
Tatabanya (Hun) bt HB Torshavn (Far) 4-0, 3-0 (7-0 on agg);
Vastra Frolunda (Swe) bt Zrinjski (Bos) 1-0, 1-2 (Agg 2-2. Vastra on away goals);
Velbazhd (Bul) bt University College Dublin (Ire) 3-3, 0-0 (Agg 3-3. Velbazhd on away goals);
Zaglebie (Pol) bt Vilash (Aze) 4-0, 3-1 (7-1 on agg).

2nd round

July 1-2 and July 8-9
AaB (Den) bt Dinaburg 0-0, 1-0 (1-0 on agg);
Austria Wien (Aut) bt Nea Salamis 0-1, 3-0 (3-1 on agg);
Auxerre (Fra) bt Stabaek 2-0, 4-2 (6-2 on agg);
Bradford (Eng) bt Atlantas 3-1, 4-1 (7-2 on agg);
Ceahlaul bt Mallorca (Spa) 1-2, 3-1 (4-3 on agg);
Chmel Blsany (Cze) bt Dnepr-Transmash 6-2, 2-0 (8-2 on agg);
Pelister bt Vastra Frolunda 3-1, 0-0 (3-1 on agg);
Marila Pribram (Cze) bt Linz ASK 1-1, 3-2 (4-3 on agg);
Salzburg (Aut) bt Nistru Otaci 6-2, 1-1 (7-3 on agg);
Sedan (Fra) bt Leiftur 3-0, 3-2 (6-2 on agg);
Sigma Olomouc bt Velbazhd 0-2, 8-0 (8-2 on agg);
Slaven bt Zaglebie 1-1, 0-0 (Agg 1-1. Slaven on away goals);
Standard Liege bt Perugia (Ita) 2-1, 1-1 (3-2 on agg);
Stuttgart (Ger) bt Neuchatel Xamax 6-1, 4-1 (10-2 on agg);
Tatabanya bt Cibalia 3-2, 0-0 (3-2 on agg);
Zenit St Petersburg (Rus) bt Primorje 3-0, 3-1 (6-1 on agg).

3rd round

July 15-16 and July 22
Aston Villa (Eng) bt Marila Pribram 0-0, 3-1 (3-1 on agg);
Austria Wien bt Ceahlaul 2-2, 3-0 (5-2 on agg);
Auxerre bt Rostselmash (Rus) 2-0, 3-1 (5-1 on agg);
Bradford bt RKC Waalwijk (Hol) 2-0, 1-0 (3-0 on agg);
Celta Vigo (Spa) bt Pelister 3-0, 2-1 (5-1 on agg);
Chmel Blsany bt Kalamata (Gre) 5-0, 3-0 (8-0 on agg);
Sigma Olomouc bt Slaven 1-1, 1-0 (2-1 on agg);
Standard Liege bt Salzburg 3-1, 1-1 (4-2 on agg);
Stuttgart bt Lens (Fra) 1-2, 1-0 (Agg 2-2. Stuttgart on away goals);
Udinese (Ita) bt AaB 2-0, 1-2 (3-2 on agg);
Wolfsburg (Ger) bt Sedan 0-0, 2-1 (2-1 on agg);
Zenit St Petersburg bt Tatabanya 2-1, 2-1 (4-2 on agg).

ALBANIA

ALBANIA – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Tirana	26	16	4	6	40	14	52
Tomori	26	15	7	4	35	22	52
Teuta	26	15	4	7	37	16	49
Vllaznia	26	11	4	11	29	28	37
Bylis	26	10	7	9	28	30	37
Lushnja	26	10	5	11	34	31	35
Shkumbini	26	10	5	11	31	32	35
Skenderbeu	26	10	4	12	33	33	34
Shqiponja	26	8	9	9	21	21	33
Dinamo	26	8	7	11	27	31	31
Apolonia	26	9	4	13	22	41	31
Flamurtari	26	9	3	14	25	35	30
Elbasani	26	8	5	13	20	32	29
Partizani	26	6	6	14	21	37	24

CHAMPIONSHIP PLAY-OFF

May 28 - Elbasani
Tirana 1 (Rizvanolli 57)
Tomori 1 (Dede og 87)
Aet. **HT:** 0-0. **Att:** 12,000.
Tirana 5-4 on pens

ANDORRA

ANDORRA – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Constellacio	12	12	0	0	71	6	36
Don Pernil	12	9	1	2	34	10	28
Construccions	12	6	2	4	24	25	20
Encamp	12	5	2	5	33	29	17
Matecosa	12	3	1	8	28	36	10
Principat	12	2	0	10	16	41	6
Sporting	12	1	2	9	12	66	5

ANDORRAN CUP – FINAL

June 4 - Andorra
Constellacio 6 (Barra 8, Bardina 13, Alvarez 45, Sivera 68, Junquera pen 86, Sanchez 89)
Encamp 0
HT: 3-0. **Att:** 1,000

ARMENIA

ARMENIAN CUP – FINAL

May 27 - Abovyan
Mika Ashtarak 2 (Mkrtychan 32, Nurdikyan 75)
Zvartnots Yerevan 1 (Avanesyan 43)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 4,500

AUSTRIA

July 4: FC Tirol 6 Admira 1.
July 5: Austria Wien 4 Grazer AK 0; SV Ried 3 Bregenz 1; Sturm Graz 5 Linz ASK 1; Salzburg 0 Rapid Wien 3.
July 11: Admira 0 Austria Wien 0.
July 12: Grazer AK 0 SV Ried 3; Linz ASK 0 Salzburg 2; Rapid Wien 4 Sturm Graz 1.
July 13: Bregenz 2 FC Tirol 2.
July 15: Admira 0 Sturm Graz 1.
July 18: Rapid Wien 2 Linz ASK 0.
July 19: SV Ried 3 Admira 2; Salzburg 2 Bregenz 0; Sturm Graz 1 Austria Wien 1; FC Tirol 1 Grazer AK 1.

AUSTRIA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Rapid Wien	3	3	0	0	9	1	9
SV Ried	3	3	0	0	9	3	9
Sturm Graz	4	2	1	1	8	6	7
Salzburg	3	2	0	1	4	3	6
FC Tirol	3	1	2	0	9	4	5
Austria Wien	3	1	2	0	5	1	5
Bregenz	3	0	1	2	3	7	1
Admira	4	0	1	3	3	10	1
Grazer AK	3	0	1	2	1	8	1
Linz ASK	3	0	0	3	1	9	0

AZERBAIJAN

AZERI CUP – FINAL

May 28 - Baku
Kapaz Ganja 2 (R Mamedov 56, R Akhmedov 70)
Garabagh 1 (Bagirov 90)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 12,000

BELARUS

BELORUSSIAN CUP – FINAL

May 28 - Minsk
Slavia Mozyr 2 (Stripeikis 77, Vasilyuk 90)
Torpedo Minsk 1 (Omelyanchyuk 42)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 2,600

CYPRUS

CYPRUS – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Anorthosis	26	21	2	3	82	28	65
Omonia	26	18	5	3	71	27	59
APOEL	26	14	4	8	58	31	46
Nea Salamis	26	13	4	9	58	34	43
Apollon	26	13	3	10	49	44	42
AEL	26	13	3	10	45	42	42
AEK	26	13	2	11	42	38	41
ENP	26	11	3	12	50	50	36
Olympiakos	26	10	6	10	57	58	36
Ethnikos Ac	26	10	5	11	42	36	35
APOP	26	9	5	12	38	47	32
Ethnikos As	26	9	4	13	35	38	31
Anagennisi	26	4	0	22	22	87	12
Alki	26	1	0	25	20	109	3

CYPRIOT CUP – FINAL

May 13 - Nicosia
Omonia 4 (Mihajlovic 36, pen 89, Raufmann 43, 56)
APOEL 2 (Yiasemakis pen 63, Orechuk 88)
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 22,225. **Ref:** Loizou

GEORGIA

GEORGIA – CHAMP'SHP POOL: FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Torpedo Kutaisi	14	8	4	2	37	11	46
Vit Georgia	14	8	5	1	15	7	41
Dinamo Tbilisi	14	5	9	0	19	4	41
Dinamo Batumi	14	8	2	4	22	10	39
Kolkheti 1913	14	7	3	4	18	10	37
Sioni Bolnisi	14	3	1	10	13	32	21
Iberia	14	2	2	10	6	29	17
Dila Gori	14	2	0	12	10	37	16

Teams carried forward points from the regular season

GEORGIAN CUP – FINAL

May 26
Lokomotiv Tbilisi 0
Torpedo Kutaisi 0
Aet. **Att:** 10,000
Lokomotiv 4-2 on pens

HUNGARY

HUNGARY – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Dunaferr	32	24	7	1	79	23	79
MTK	32	18	9	5	64	28	63
Vasas	32	19	4	9	58	32	61
Tatabanya	32	14	13	5	37	34	55
Ferencvaros	32	14	8	10	61	39	50
Debrecen	32	14	8	10	52	41	50
Pecs	32	11	12	9	41	47	45
Gyor	32	12	8	12	52	36	44
Ujpest	32	11	11	10	47	39	44
Nyiregyhaza	32	12	8	12	32	42	44
Zalaegerszeg	32	8	15	9	34	31	39
Kispest-Honved	32	10	9	13	27	39	39
Nagykanizsa	32	7	10	15	27	44	31
Haladas	32	7	8	17	34	54	29
Siofok*	32	7	7	18	26	51	25
Diosgyor	32	5	9	18	26	56	24
Vac	32	3	6	23	24	85	15

**3 pts deducted*

LATVIA

LATVIAN CUP – FINAL

May 27 - Riga
Skonto Riga 4 (Rubins 8, 63, Kolesnichenko 33, Stradinsh og 52)
Metalurgs Liepaja 1 (Verpakovsky 83)
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 3,000. **Ref:** Sipailo

LITHUANIA

LITHUANIA – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Zalgiris Kaunas	18	12	5	1	36	10	41
Zalgiris Vilnius	18	10	6	2	33	9	36
Atlantas Klaipeda	18	9	6	3	34	24	33
Kareda Siauliai	18	9	3	6	31	18	30
Ekranes Panevezys	18	7	8	3	22	11	29
Inkaras Kaunas	18	8	5	5	25	18	29
Nevezis Kedainiai	18	3	7	8	10	22	16
Banga Gargzdai	18	2	6	10	12	40	12
Ardena Vilnius	18	2	5	11	10	26	11
Dainava Alytus	18	1	3	14	9	44	6

LITHUANIAN CUP – FINAL

May 20 - Marijampole
Zalgiris Vilnius 0
Ekranes Panevezys 1 (Gardzijauskas pen 57)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 800. **Ref:** Miliauskas

LUXEMBOURG

CHAMPIONSHIP PLAY-OFFS

FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
F91 Dudelange	6	5	1	0	18	9	16
Jeunesse d'Esch	6	2	2	2	14	11	8
Grevenmacher	6	1	2	3	7	9	5
Avenir Beggen	6	1	1	4	7	15	4

LUXEMBOURG CUP – FINAL

May 26 - Luxembourg
Jeunesse d'Esch 4 (Lamborelle 21, 45, 76, Morrocutti 82)
Mondercange 1 (Christophe 81)
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 8,732. **Ref:** Gross

MACEDONIA

MACEDONIA – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Sloga	26	18	7	1	55	13	61
Pobeda	26	15	7	4	57	23	52
Rabotnicki	26	16	2	8	41	26	50
Pelister	26	14	5	7	48	30	47
Cementarnica	26	14	5	7	43	29	47
Sileks	26	11	7	8	43	29	40
Makedonija	26	10	6	10	29	28	36
Tikves	26	9	4	13	37	54	31
Borec	26	8	6	12	30	42	30
Vardar	26	7	8	11	39	38	29
Sasa	26	7	7	12	23	35	28
Osogovo	26	7	5	14	34	53	26
Napredok K	26	4	8	14	30	48	20
Kumanovo	26	2	3	21	16	77	9

MACEDONIAN CUP – FINAL

May 20 - Prilep
Pobeda 0
Sloga 6 (Miserdovski 43, Bekiri 56, 65, 75, Mustafi pen 72, Presilsko 82)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 12,000. **Ref:** Bungurov

MALTA

MALTA: PLAY-OFFS – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Birkirkara	10	7	1	2	22	5	22
Sliema	10	7	1	2	21	13	22
Valletta	10	5	1	4	17	14	16
Floriana	10	3	1	6	15	20	10
Pieta	10	3	0	7	12	21	9
Hibernians	10	3	0	7	9	23	9

MALTESE CUP – FINAL

May 18 - Valletta
Sliema 4 (Bonnici 10, Mifsud 36, 40, Busuttil 75)
Birkirkara 1 (Brincat 74)
HT: 3-0. **Att:** 5,500. **Ref:** Darmanin

MOLDOVA

MOLDOVA – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Zimbru	36	25	7	4	78	21	82
Serif	36	25	6	5	77	25	81
Constructorul	36	18	11	7	52	23	65
Nistru-Unisport	36	16	11	9	53	28	59
Tiligul	36	12	13	11	35	33	49
Olimpia Balti	36	13	7	16	42	51	46
FC Agro	36	10	10	16	36	56	40
Moldova-Gaz	36	10	9	17	37	48	39
Roma Balti	36	8	6	22	28	66	30
Energetic	36	2	2	32	13	100	8

MOLDOVAN CUP – FINAL

May 24 - Chisinau
Constructorul 1 (Boicenko 90)
Zimbru 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 5,000. **Ref:** Antonov

NORTHERN IRELAND

NORTHERN IRELAND – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Linfield	36	24	7	5	68	30	79
Coleraine	36	18	7	11	64	42	61
Glenavon	36	17	10	9	55	34	61
Glentoran	36	18	7	11	59	51	61
Portadown	36	15	7	14	64	62	52
Newry	36	11	7	18	44	58	40
Crusaders	36	9	13	14	41	55	40
Cliftonville	36	8	13	15	40	58	37
Ballymena	36	6	16	14	45	62	34
Distillery	36	8	5	23	37	65	29

NORTHERN IRELAND CUP – FINAL

May 6 - Windsor Park, Belfast
Glentoran 1 (Gilzean 59)
Portadown 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 9,000. **Ref:** Ferry

NORWAY

July 2: Haugesund 2 Brann 4; Molde 0 Moss 3; Odd Grenland 2 Bodo/Glimt 2; Rosenborg 2 Valerenga 1; Start 1 Tromso 1; Viking 3 Bryne 0.
July 5: Bodo/Glimt 3 Start 4; Brann 0 Lillestrom 2; Bryne 3 Rosenborg 3; Haugesund 0 Tromso 2; Moss 1 Viking 5; Stabaek 6 Molde 1; Valerenga 0 Odd Grenland 0.
July 9: Lillestrom 4 Haugesund 1; Odd Grenland 4 Bryne 2; Rosenborg 5 Moss 1; Start 2 Valerenga 3; Tromso 4 Bodo/Glimt 1.
July 12: Molde 0 Rosenborg 1.
July 16: Bodo/Glimt 2 Haugesund 2; Odd Grenland 2 Moss 2; Rosenborg 3 Stabaek 0; Start 4 Bryne 2; Tromso 1 Valerenga 1; Viking 2 Brann 6.
July 17: Molde 0 Lillestrom 2.
July 23: Bryne 2 Tromso 3; Haugesund 2 Molde 4; Lillestrom 0 Viking 1; Moss 4 Start 0; Stabaek 1 Odd Grenland 2; Valerenga 1 Bodo/Glimt 1; Brann 1 Rosenborg 1.

NORWAY

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Rosenborg	16	11	4	1	37	14	37
Brann	14	8	3	3	34	23	27
Viking	14	8	2	4	31	21	26
Odd Grenland	15	6	5	4	25	20	23
Tromso	15	6	5	4	26	26	23
Molde	15	6	5	4	24	27	23
Stabaek	13	6	2	5	29	15	20
Lillestrom	13	5	5	3	18	10	20
Moss	15	5	5	5	22	23	20
Valerenga	15	3	6	6	20	22	15
Bodo/Glimt	14	3	6	5	23	32	15
Haugesund	15	3	2	10	23	42	11
Bryne	15	2	3	10	21	38	9
Start	15	2	3	10	18	38	9

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Shelbourne	33	19	12	2	49	20	69
Cork	33	16	10	7	53	31	58
Bohemians	33	16	9	8	40	23	57
UCD	33	13	12	8	40	29	51
Shamrock	33	13	11	9	48	36	50
St Patrick's	33	13	11	9	42	31	50
Derry	33	12	10	11	33	40	46
Finn Harps	33	8	10	15	39	41	34
Galway	33	8	10	15	32	49	34
Waterford	33	7	12	14	25	38	33
Sligo	33	5	10	18	31	60	25
Drogheda	33	4	11	18	21	55	23

IRISH CUP – FINAL

Apr 30 - Tolka Park, Dublin
Shelbourne 0
Bohemians 0
Ref: Stacey

REPLAY

May 5 - Dalymount Park, Dublin
Shelbourne 1 (Fenlon 39)
Bohemians 0
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Stacey

RUSSIA

June 27: Saturn 1 Lokomotiv NN 0; Chernomorets 3 Anzhi 0; Torpedo 2 Rotor 0; Zenit 5 Fakel 0; Rostselmash 2 Spartak 3; Alaniya 4 Kryliya Sovetov 3; Uralan 0 Lokomotiv M 1; CSKA 2 Dinamo 2.
July 4: Spartak 4 Torpedo 2.
July 5: Dinamo 1 Zenit 2.
July 8: Kryliya Sovetov 0 Lokomotiv M 2; Dinamo 2 Chernomorets 2; Lokomotiv NN 0 Torpedo 1; Fakel 0 Alaniya 0; Spartak 2 Uralan 0; Rotor 3 Rostselmash 0; Saturn 2 CSKA 1.
July 14: Torpedo 1 Dinamo 1.
July 15: CSKA 2 Kryliya Sovetov 0; Uralan 0 Fakel 1; Alaniya 2 Rotor 0; Chernomorets 1 Saturn 1.
July 16: Lokomotiv M 3 Spartak 2.
July 22: Fakel 0 Lokomotiv M 0; Spartak 1 Kryliya Sovetov 2; Saturn 0 Torpedo 1; Anzhi 2 Alaniya 0; Chernomorets 3 CSKA 0.

RUSSIA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Spartak	19	14	1	4	42	19	43
Lokomotiv M	18	11	6	1	21	8	39
Torpedo	19	10	5	4	25	18	35
Chernomorets	18	9	6	3	32	12	33
Anzhi	17	10	2	5	27	14	32
Dinamo	18	8	6	4	25	20	30
Zenit	17	8	4	5	23	14	28
Saturn	18	8	4	6	17	16	28
Alaniya	18	6	4	8	17	22	22
Rotor	17	5	4	8	18	30	19
Kryliya Sovetov	18	6	0	12	19	34	18
Rostselmash	17	3	8	6	12	14	17
Fakel	18	3	8	7	17	30	17
CSKA	18	4	3	11	15	28	15
Uralan	17	2	4	11	11	23	10
Lokomotiv NN	17	0	5	12	6	25	5

SAN MARINO

CHAMPIONSHIP PLAY-OFFS

Round 1 - Group 2nds v 3rds
Apr 8: Tre Fiori 3 Virtus 1; Cailungo 3 Libertas 0.

Round 2 - Group winners v Round 1 winners
Apr 13: Domagnano 0 Cailungo 0 (Domagnano 5-4 on pens); Folgore 0 Tre Fiori 0 (Folgore 5-3 on pens).

Round 3 - Round 1 losers v Round 2 losers
Apr 17: Tre Fiori 2 Libertas 1 (aet); Virtus 2 Cailungo 2 (Virtus 5-3 on pens).

Semi-finals
Apr 19: Folgore 3 Domagnano 1; Tre Fiori 1 Virtus 2 (aet).

Preliminary Final
Apr 28: Domagnano 1 Virtus 0.

Final
May 5: Folgore 3 Domagnano 1.

SWEDEN

July 4: GAIS 0 Halmstads 0; Hammarby 2 Elfsborg 3.
July 5: Helsingborgs 4 Vastra Frolunda 0; Norrkoping 3 AIK 0; Sundsvall 2 IFK Gothenburg 2; Orebro 2 Trelleborgs 2; Orgryte 0 Hacken 2.
July 9: Trelleborgs 0 GAIS 2.
July 10: AIK 2 Sundsvall 1; Elfsborg 2 Orebro 1; Hacken 2 Hammarby 2.
July 11: IFK Gothenburg 2 Helsingborgs 1.
July 12: Halmstads 0 Norrkoping 1; Vastra Frolunda 1 Orgryte 3.
July 16: IFK Gothenburg 0 Vastra Frolunda 2.
July 17: GAIS 2 Elfsborg 3; Sundsvall 1 Halmstads 2; Orebro 1 Hacken 2.
July 18: Helsingborgs 1 AIK 4.
July 19: Hammarby 1 Orgryte 0; Norrkoping 0 Trelleborgs 0.
July 22: Halmstads 3 Helsingborgs 1.

SWEDEN

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Halmstads	12	8	1	3	21	9	25
AIK	11	7	1	3	15	13	22
IFK Gothenburg	11	5	4	2	18	12	19
Norrkoping	11	5	3	3	15	9	18
Elfsborg	11	6	0	5	19	16	18
Helsingborgs	12	5	2	5	17	16	17
Hammarby	11	5	2	4	13	13	17
Orgryte	11	5	0	6	11	14	15
Orebro	11	3	4	4	18	17	13
Hacken	11	3	4	4	16	19	13
Trelleborgs	11	3	3	5	9	11	12
Sundsvall	11	3	3	5	14	17	12
GAIS	11	1	5	5	10	16	8
Vastra Frolunda	11	2	2	7	7	21	8

SWITZERLAND

July 15: Lucerne 2 Neuchatel Xamax 0; Basle 4 Sion 1; Grasshopper 3 Lausanne 0; Lugano 1 St Gallen 0; Servette 2 Aarau 1; Yverdon 1 Zurich 1.
July 18: Zurich 2 Servette 2.
July 19: Aarau 0 Lugano 2; Lausanne 4 Yverdon 2; Neuchatel Xamax 2 Basle 0; Sion 1 Grasshopper 0; St Gallen 2 Lucerne 1.
July 22: Basle 7 Lucerne 4; Grasshopper 6 Neuchatel Xamax 0; Lugano 1 Zurich 0; Servette 0 Lausanne 4; St Gallen 3 Aarau 0; Yverdon 0 Sion 1.

SWITZERLAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Lugano	3	3	0	0	4	0	9
Grasshopper	3	2	0	1	9	1	6
Basle	3	2	0	1	11	7	6
Lausanne	3	2	0	1	8	5	6
St Gallen	3	2	0	1	5	2	6
Sion	3	2	0	1	3	4	6
Servette	3	1	1	1	4	7	4
Lucerne	3	1	0	2	7	9	3
Neuchatel Xamax	3	1	0	2	2	8	3
Zurich	3	0	2	1	3	4	2
Yverdon	3	0	1	2	3	6	1
Aarau	3	0	0	3	1	7	0

UKRAINE

July 12: Tavriya 3 Nyva 0; Stal 1 CSKA 2; Shakhtar 3 Metalurh D 0; Metalist 3 Vorskla 1; Kryvbas 5 Karpaty 2; Metalurh M 3 Metalurh Z 1; Dnipro 1 Dynamo 1.
July 16: Dynamo 3 Tavriya 0; Nyva 0 Stal 0; CSKA 1 Shakhtar 0; Metalurh D 2 Metalist 1; Vorskla 0 Kryvbas 1; Karpaty 3 Metalurh M 0; Metalurh Z 1 Dnipro 2.
July 22: Tavriya 3 Stal 2; Shakhtar 2 Nyva 1; Metalist 0 CSKA 0; Kryvbas 3 Metalurh D 2; Metalurh M 1 Vorskla 0; Dnipro 1 Karpaty 0; Dynamo 2 Metalurh Z 1.

UKRAINE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Kryvbas	3	3	0	0	9	4	9
Dynamo	3	2	1	0	6	2	7
Dnipro	3	2	1	0	4	2	7
CSKA	3	2	1	0	3	1	7
Shakhtar	3	2	0	1	5	2	6
Tavriya	3	2	0	1	6	5	6
Metalurh M	3	2	0	1	4	4	6
Metalist	3	1	1	1	4	3	4
Karpaty	3	1	0	2	5	6	3
Metalurh D	3	1	0	2	4	7	3
Stal	3	0	1	2	3	5	1
Nyva	3	0	1	2	1	5	1
Metalurh Z	3	0	0	3	3	7	0
Vorskla	3	0	0	3	1	5	0

WALES

WALES – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
TNS	34	24	4	6	69	37	76
Barry	34	23	5	6	98	34	74
Cwmbran	34	21	6	7	71	37	69
Carmarthen	34	22	3	9	68	42	69
Llanelli	34	21	3	10	76	46	66
Aberystwyth	34	19	4	11	70	46	61
Connah's Quay	34	17	6	11	57	36	57
Newtown	34	14	6	14	49	41	48
Bangor	34	15	3	16	56	61	48
Afan Lido	34	12	10	12	44	42	46
Rhyl	34	13	5	16	41	60	44
Caersws	34	11	8	15	49	50	41
Flexsys	34	13	2	19	44	63	41
Rhayader	34	9	7	18	34	47	34
Haverfordwest	34	6	11	17	37	65	29
Inter Cardiff*	34	8	6	20	30	62	29
Conwy**	34	6	5	23	33	97	20
Caernarfon	34	1	8	25	21	81	11

**1pt deducted*
***3pts deducted*

WELSH CUP – FINAL

May 7 - Wrexham
Bangor 1 (Roberts 29)
Cwmbran 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 1,125. **Ref:** Lawlor

SOUTH AMERICA

ARGENTINA

CLOSING CHAMPIONSHIP

Wednesday, June 28

Union Santa Fe 2 (M Donnet 35, Silvera 82)
Boca Juniors 5 (Guillermo Barros Schelotto pen 4, 12, Palermo 28, La Paglia 73, Traverso 89)

Friday, June 30

Independiente 2 (Marioni 42, 53)
Colon Santa Fe 3 (Biaggio 17, Castagno Suarez 57, Fuertes 64)

Saturday, July 1

Newell's Old Boys 2 (Gigena 31, Manso 39)
Racing Club 0

Sunday, July 2

Belgrano Cordoba 2 (Amaya 33, Artime 84)
Estudiantes 1 (Simone 55)

Gimnasia J 0
Ferro Carril Oeste 0

Gimnasia LP 2 (Sava 3, Messera 61)
Boca Juniors 1 (Palermo 59)

Lanus 1 (Klimowicz 55)
Rosario Central 0

River Plate 5 (Coudet 41, 67, Aimar 61, Angel 64, Diaz 87)
Chacarita Juniors 0

Union Santa Fe 1 (Silvera 68)
Talleres Cordoba 3 (Silva 16, Gigena 63, Roth 73)

Velez Sarsfield 1 (Camps 71)
San Lorenzo 0

Monday, July 3

Argentinos Juniors 1 (Zagharian 17)
Instituto Cordoba 1 (Amato 82)

Wednesday, July 5

Boca Juniors 2 (Bermudez 73, Delgado 85)
Estudiantes 0

Chacarita Juniors 1 (Rosada 19)
Gimnasia J 0

Racing Club 0
River Plate 2 (Angel 54, Zapata 61)

Friday, July 7

Instituto Cordoba 1 (Sarria 77)
Velez Sarsfield 2 (Camps 34, 89)

Saturday, July 8

Racing Club 6 (Estevez 5, 15, 54, Bastia 31, Principiano 46, Garcia 80)
Union Santa Fe 0

Rosario Central 3 (M Gonzalez 41, E Gonzalez 83, Campora 88)
Argentinos Juniors 1 (Kuhl 73)

Sunday, July 9

Boca Juniors 5 (Arce 47, 50, Castillo og 70, Barijho 78, 82)
Belgrano Cordoba 1 (Amaya 84)

Colon Santa Fe 3 (Castagno Suarez 44, Fuertes 65, pen 77)
Lanus 0

Estudiantes 1 (Krupoviesa 81)
Independiente 1 (D Montenegro 17)

Ferro Carril Oeste 0
River Plate 3 (Angel 21, 32, Aimar 25)

San Lorenzo 3 (Romagnoli 10, Franco 31, Tuzzio pen 49)
Gimnasia J 1 (M Lobo 27)

Talleres Cordoba 2 (Gigena 34, 38)
Gimnasia LP 0

Monday, July 10

Chacarita Juniors 0
Newell's Old Boys 1 (S Cejas pen 43)

Friday, July 14

Gimnasia LP 1 (Messera 73)
Racing Club 0

Saturday, July 15

Argentinos Juniors 0
Colon Santa Fe 1 (Fuertes pen 24)

Gimnasia J 2 (M Lobo 10, Garnier 90)
Instituto Cordoba 2 (Jimenez 74, Alaniz 90)

Independiente 2 (D Montenegro 52, Forlan 82)
Belgrano Cordoba 1 (Amaya 12)

Lanus 1 (J Fernandez 44)
Estudiantes 0

River Plate 2 (Berizzo 16, Zapata 32)
San Lorenzo 2 (Romeo 45, Santana 78)

Talleres Cordoba 2 (Maidana 56, Gigena 69)
Boca Juniors 2 (Matellan 61, Gimenez 74)

Union Santa Fe 1 (Paz 50)
Chacarita Juniors 4 (Boujon 1, Garcia 6, Abalos 33, Capria 65)

Velez Sarsfield 2 (Mendez 69, Castroman 88)
Rosario Central 1 (Rivarola pen 34)

Monday, July 17

Newell's Old Boys 2 (Cobelli 50, Damiani 64)
Ferro Carril Oeste 0

ARGENTINA – CLOSING: FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
River Plate	19	12	6	1	44	17	42
Independiente	19	11	3	5	42	25	36
Colon Santa Fe	19	11	3	5	38	26	36
San Lorenzo	19	11	3	5	27	15	36
Newell's Old Boys	19	10	4	5	32	21	34
Velez Sarsfield	19	9	7	3	28	18	34
Boca Juniors*	19	10	6	3	38	17	33
Union Santa Fe	19	9	2	8	28	40	29
Gimnasia LP	19	8	4	7	28	33	28
Talleres Cordoba	19	7	6	6	21	22	27
Lanus*	19	8	4	7	32	22	25
Instituto Cordoba	19	6	7	6	28	29	25
Rosario Central	19	6	5	8	25	26	23
Belgrano Cordoba	19	6	4	9	28	31	22
Chacarita Juniors	19	5	5	9	20	30	20
Argentinos Juniors	19	4	6	9	21	36	18
Estudiantes	19	3	7	9	21	30	16
Racing Club	19	3	6	10	22	29	15
Gimnasia J	19	2	4	13	15	34	10
Ferro Carril Oeste	19	2	2	15	9	46	8

**3 pts deducted*

TOP GOALSCORERS

17 Esteban Fuertes (Colon Santa Fe)
13 Bruno Marioni (Independiente)
12 Daniel Jimenez (Instituto Cordoba)
10 Diego Klimowicz (Lanus)

BOLIVIA

OPENING CHAMPIONSHIP

June 14: Bolivar 1 Real Potosi 2.
June 17: Independiente 3 Oriente 2.
June 18: Bolivar 0 Jorge Wilstermann 1; Atletico Pompeya 0 Guabira 3; Blooming 0 Santa Cruz 4; Union Central 1 Mariscal Braun 0; Real Potosi 1 The Strongest 1.
June 21: Bolivar 3 Oriente 0.
June 25: Independiente 2 Santa Cruz 0.
July 1: Mariscal Braun 3 Independiente 1; Santa Cruz 0 Union Central 0.
July 2: Jorge Wilstermann 2 The Strongest 0; Oriente 1 Real Potosi 0; Guabira 3 Blooming 1; Bolivar 4 Atletico Pompeya 0.
July 5: Bolivar 4 Santa Cruz 2.
July 9: Atletico Pompeya 1 Jorge Wilstermann 0; Blooming 1 Bolivar 5; Union Central 2 Guabira 1; Real Potosi 3 Mariscal Braun 2; The Strongest 5 Oriente 1.

BOLIVIA – OPENING: FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
J Wilstermann	22	14	2	6	36	20	44
Guabira	22	12	2	8	39	35	38
Bolivar	22	12	1	9	48	37	37
The Strongest	22	10	4	8	49	28	34
Real Potosi	22	11	1	10	31	40	34
Independiente	22	10	3	9	35	29	33
Oriente	22	8	9	5	34	29	33
Mariscal Braun	22	10	2	10	38	37	32
Blooming	22	8	4	10	33	42	28
Atletico Pompeya	22	6	4	12	24	49	22
Santa Cruz	22	5	5	12	31	43	20
Union Central	22	4	7	11	19	28	19

CHILE

PRE-SEASON CUP – SEMI-FINALS

May 3: U de Chile 3 Colo Colo 1.
May 4: Santiago Morning 4 Cobreloa 0.

FINAL

May 11: U de Chile 2 Santiago Morning 1 (aet).

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

June 17: U de Chile 3 Colo Colo 1; Everton 2 Huachipato 2.
June 18: Puerto Montt 1 O'Higgins 0; Audax Italiano 1 Santiago Wanderers 3; Palestino 1 Santiago Morning 4; Union Espanola 3 U Catolica 3; Dep Concepcion 1 Coquimbo Unido 1; Cobreloa 3 Osorno 0.
July 9: U Catolica 1 U de Chile 2; Colo Colo 2 Cobreloa 2; Coquimbo Unido 1 Union Espanola 2; Santiago Wanderers 2 Dep Concepcion 1; Huachipato 3 O'Higgins 2; Osorno 2 Palestino 0; Audax Italiano 1 Puerto Montt 2.

CHILE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
U Catolica	10	6	2	2	22	12	20
U de Chile	10	6	2	2	17	9	20
Union Espanola	10	5	4	1	19	10	19
Sant Wanderers	10	5	4	1	19	12	19
Cobreloa	10	5	3	2	15	8	18
Colo Colo	10	4	5	1	17	14	17
Dep Concepcion	10	4	4	2	8	6	16
Sant Morning	9	4	3	2	13	8	15
Audax Italiano	10	5	0	5	11	10	15
Puerto Montt	10	3	3	4	14	19	12
Coquimbo Unido	10	3	2	5	12	17	11
Palestino	10	2	3	5	10	17	9
O'Higgins	9	2	1	6	7	13	7
Huachipato	10	1	3	6	12	18	6
Osorno	10	1	2	7	8	21	5
Everton	8	0	3	5	7	17	3

COLOMBIA

OPENING CHAMPIONSHIP

June 14: Indep Medellin 0 Tulua 1.
June 18: Tolima 1 Millonarios 1; Indep Santa Fe 0 At Huila 0; Once Caldas 1 Real Cartagena 1; Dep Pasto 1 America 5; At Nacional 3 Bucaramanga 0; Dep Cali 1 Indep Medellin 2; Tulua 1 Quindio 0; At Junior 2 Envigado 0.
June 21: Dep Pasto 2 Millonarios 2.
June 25: Millonarios 1 Once Caldas 1; Envigado 0 Indep Santa Fe 2; Real Cartagena 0 Dep Cali 1; America 1 At Junior 1; At Nacional 1 Dep Pasto 2; At Huila 0 Tulua 1; Bucaramanga 2 Indep Medellin 2.
July 1: Tulua 1 Envigado 1; At Junior 1 Nacional 0.
July 2: Indep Santa Fe 4 America 1; Dep Cali 1 Millonarios 0; Dep Pasto 0 Bucaramanga 0; Tolima 1 At Huila 0; Once Caldas 1 Quindio 1; Indep Medellin 2 Real Cartagena 2.
July 5: Quindio 1 Tolima 3.

COLOMBIA – OPENING: FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Dep Cali	22	11	7	4	36	22	40
America	22	11	5	6	42	22	38
Tolima	22	11	3	8	36	29	36
Millonarios	22	8	9	5	32	27	33
At Nacional	22	9	5	8	35	29	32
At Junior	22	9	5	8	33	27	32
Envigado	22	8	8	6	30	25	32
Tulua	22	9	5	8	30	31	32
Indep Santa Fe	22	8	7	7	32	30	31
Real Cartagena	22	7	6	9	21	23	27
At Huila	22	6	9	7	21	27	27
Once Caldas	22	6	9	7	24	31	27
Indep Medellin	22	6	8	8	28	34	26
Dep Pasto	22	6	4	12	27	44	22
Bucaramanga	22	5	6	11	16	28	21
Quindio	22	5	6	11	24	38	21

CLOSING CHAMPIONSHIP

July 9: Millonarios 1 Bucaramanga 1; Real Cartagena 2 Indep Medellin 1; Dep Pasto 1 Quindio 2; Once Caldas 0 America 1; Tolima 2 Indep Santa Fe 3; Tulua 1 At Junior 1; Dep Cali 1 Envigado 1; At Nacional 4 At Huila 1.

ECUADOR

OPENING CHAMPIONSHIP

June 14: Macara 2 LDU 0; Espoli 0 Dep Quito 2; Aucas 3 Emelec 0; El Nacional 6 Tecnico Univ 1; Barcelona 3 Olmedo 1.
June 17: Emelec 4 Dep Quito 1.
June 18: LDU 2 Barcelona 0; Tecnico Univ 0 Espoli 2; Aucas 1 Macara 1; Olmedo 2 El Nacional 1.
June 21: Macara 2 Emelec 0; El Nacional 2 LDU 1; Barcelona 3 Aucas 2; Espoli 0 Olmedo 1; Dep Quito 1 Tecnico Univ 1.

ECUADOR – OPENING: FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Olmedo	18	8	6	4	18	14	30
Aucas	18	8	5	5	20	17	29
El Nacional	18	7	6	5	34	26	27
LDU	18	7	6	5	30	23	27
Macara	18	6	7	5	25	25	25
Emelec	18	7	3	8	23	22	24
Espoli	18	6	6	6	19	20	24
Dep Quito	18	4	8	6	24	24	20
Barcelona	18	4	7	7	19	27	19
Tecnico Univ	18	3	6	9	21	35	15

CLOSING CHAMPIONSHIP

July 1: El Nacional 3 Emelec 1.
July 2: Olmedo 2 LDU 0; Aucas 1 Dep Quito 0; Tecnico Univ 0 Espoli 3; Barcelona 2 Macara 1.
July 5: Emelec 4 Aucas 0; Espoli 2 Barcelona 0; Macara 3 El Nacional 2; LDU 2 Tecnico Univ 1; Dep Quito 2 Olmedo 0.
July 9: Aucas 1 Macara 1; Tecnico Univ 4 Dep Quito 3; Olmedo 1 Emelec 0; Barcelona 2 El Nacional 1; Espoli 0 LDU 0.
July 11: Emelec 2 Tecnico Univ 0.
July 12: El Nacional 3 Aucas 1; LDU 2 Barcelona 1; Macara 1 Olmedo 2; Dep Quito 1 Espoli 0.

ECUADOR – CLOSING

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Olmedo	4	3	0	1	5	3	9
Espoli	4	2	1	1	5	1	7
LDU	4	2	1	1	4	4	7
Emelec	4	2	0	2	7	4	6
El Nacional	4	2	0	2	9	7	6
Dep Quito	4	2	0	2	6	5	6
Barcelona	4	2	0	2	5	6	6
Macara	4	1	1	2	6	7	4
Aucas	4	1	1	2	3	8	4
Tecnico Univ	4	1	0	3	5	10	3

PARAGUAY

OPENING CHAMPIONSHIP

June 25: Guarani 1 12 de Octubre 0; Sportivo Luqueno 1 Colegiales 0; San Lorenzo 1 Cerro Cora 1; Sol de America 4 Universal 2; Cerro Porteno 2 Olimpia 0.
July 2: Olimpia 0 San Lorenzo 2; Guarani 2 Sportivo Luqueno 1; Colegiales 2 Cerro Porteno 0; Cerro Cora 0 Sol de America 0; 12 de Octubre 2 Universal 0.
July 9: Sportivo Luqueno 1 12 de Octubre 1; Cerro Porteno 2 Guarani 0; Sol de America 1 Olimpia 1; San Lorenzo 2 Colegiales 0.
July 17: Universal 3 Cerro Cora 1.

PARAGUAY – OPENING: FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Olimpia	18	11	5	2	38	20	38
Guarani	18	9	5	4	28	16	32
Sol de America	18	9	5	4	27	21	32
San Lorenzo	18	7	6	5	18	16	27
12 de Octubre	18	8	3	7	21	22	27
Cerro Porteno	18	7	5	6	22	17	26
Sportivo Luqueno	18	6	5	7	25	31	23
Colegiales	18	6	2	10	20	25	20
Cerro Cora	18	4	4	10	17	27	16
Universal	18	2	2	14	20	41	8

PERU

OPENING CHAMPIONSHIP

June 17: Alianza Lima 0 Sporting Cristal 0; Dep UPAO 0 Union Minas 2; Melgar 0 Cienciano 0.
June 18: Alianza Atletico 1 Dep Pesquero 1; Universitario 2 Dep Municipal 1; Juan Aurich 0 Sport Boys 2.
June 24: Sport Boys 4 Melgar 2.
June 25: Union Minas 1 Universitario 2; Sporting Cristal 4 Cienciano 0; Alianza Lima 2 Dep UPAO 1; Dep Municipal 1 Alianza Atletico 1; Dep Pesquero 1 Juan Aurich 0.
July 2: Universitario 2 Sporting Cristal 0; Dep Municipal 1 Alianza Lima 1; Alianza Atletico 0 Melgar 0; Cienciano 2 Dep Pesquero 0; Juan Aurich 1 Union Minas 1; Dep UPAO 1 Sport Boys 4.
July 8: Universitario 1 Juan Aurich 1.
July 9: Dep Pesquero 3 Sporting Cristal 1; Alianza Lima 0 Alianza Atletico 1; Sport Boys 3 Dep Municipal 1; Cienciano 1 Union Minas 0; Melgar 0 Dep UPAO 0.

PERU – OPENING: FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Universitario	22	13	7	2	39	20	46
Sport Boys	22	11	6	5	36	25	39
Melgar	22	10	6	6	39	27	36
Cienciano	22	10	6	6	31	30	36
Alianza Lima	22	9	7	6	23	22	34
Union Minas	22	10	3	9	28	23	33
Alianza Atletico	22	8	6	8	28	27	30
Sporting Cristal	22	7	7	8	40	31	28
Dep Pesquero	22	6	6	10	21	32	24
Juan Aurich	22	3	11	8	21	30	20
Dep UPAO	22	4	7	11	24	39	19
Dep Municipal	22	2	6	14	24	48	12

URUGUAY

OPENING CHAMPIONSHIP

June 14: Penarol 4 River Plate 3; Frontera Rivera 0 Bella Vista M 3; Tacuarembo 0 Dep Maldonado 0; Danubio 3 Rentistas 5; Juventud 3 Huracan Buceo 2; Rocha 2 Villa Espanola 2; Cerro 6 Bella Vista P 2.
June 15: Racing 2 Liverpool 3.
June 17: Huracan Buceo 0 Penarol 1.
June 18: Cerro 1 Tacuarembo 1; Bella Vista P 2 Rocha 2; Dep Maldonado 0 Frontera Rivera 2; Rentistas 0 Defensor 1; Danubio 3 Liverpool 0; Bella Vista M 5 Juventud 3; River 2 Nacional 5.
July 10: Racing 1 Villa Espanola 3.

URUGUAY – OPENING: FINAL*

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Nacional	16	14	2	0	41	12	44
Danubio	17	11	3	3	45	22	36
Penarol	17	11	3	3	39	26	36
Defensor	16	10	3	3	38	21	33
Cerro	17	8	4	5	39	30	28
Rentistas	17	8	4	5	31	24	28
Bella Vista M	17	6	5	6	29	27	23
Tacuarembo	17	5	8	4	21	23	23
Dep Maldonado	17	7	1	9	25	32	22
River Plate	17	4	6	7	30	32	18
Racing	17	5	3	9	25	33	18
Juventud	17	4	6	7	17	25	18
Rocha	17	4	6	7	30	41	18
Liverpool	17	5	3	9	19	30	18
Bella Vista P	17	5	2	10	22	30	17
Frontera Rivera	17	4	3	10	25	39	15
Villa Espanola	17	3	5	9	24	40	14
Huracan Buceo	17	3	3	11	20	33	12

**Pending result of Nacional-Defensor game*

CENTRAL & NORTH AMERICA

USA

July 1: Columbus Crew 2 San Jose Earthquakes 1; Tampa Bay Mutiny 0 MetroStars 2; DC United 1 Colorado Rapids 1 (aet); Dallas Burn 4 LA Galaxy 2.
July 4: Miami Fusion 2 New England Revolution 1; Tampa Bay Mutiny 3 DC United 0; Colorado Rapids 2 Chicago Fire 1 (aet); San Jose Earthquakes 0 Kansas City Wizards 0 (aet); LA Galaxy 1 Columbus Crew 0.
July 5: MetroStars 2 Dallas Burn 1.
July 8: Miami Fusion 3 LA Galaxy 5; Dallas Burn 3 DC United 0; Chicago 3 Columbus Crew 1; Kansas City Wizards 0 MetroStars 1; Colorado Rapids 0 San Jose Earthquakes 1.
July 12: DC United 2 Tampa Bay Mutiny 2 (aet); Columbus Crew 4 New England Revolution 1.
July 15: New England Revolution 0 MetroStars 2; Miami Fusion 0 Dallas Burn 3; Columbus Crew 2 Kansas City Wizards 0; Chicago Fire 0 Tampa Bay Mutiny 0 (aet); San Jose Earthquakes 1 Colorado Rapids 2; LA Galaxy 1 DC United 2.
July 19: Kansas City Wizards 0 New England Revolution 1; Dallas Burn 1 Miami Fusion 1.
July 21: Colorado Rapids 1 Chicago Fire 1 (aet).
July 22: San Jose Earthquakes 1 New England Revolution 2; MetroStars 4 Miami Fusion 2; Tampa Bay Mutiny 2 LA Galaxy 0; Kansas City Wizards 3 Columbus Crew 1.

EASTERN DIVISION

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
MetroStars	22	13	2	7	39	29	41
New England	23	9	5	9	35	36	32
Miami Fusion	23	7	5	11	32	41	26
DC United	24	5	6	13	34	48	21

CENTRAL DIVISION

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Tampa Bay	23	12	2	9	44	33	38
Chicago Fire	23	10	5	8	46	39	35
Dallas Burn	24	9	4	11	40	40	31
Columbus Crew	24	9	4	11	36	41	31

WESTERN DIVISION

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Kansas City	22	12	5	5	33	17	41
LA Galaxy	24	10	7	7	34	30	37
Colorado Rapids	23	10	3	10	30	42	33
San Jose	23	5	8	10	27	34	23

LEADING GOALSCORERS

18 Mamadou Diallo (Tampa Bay Mutiny)
14 Dante Washington (Columbus Crew)
13 Ariel Graziani (Dallas Burn)
12 Ante Razov (Chicago Fire)

AFRICA

AFRICAN NATIONS CUP QUALIFIERS

PRELIMINARY ROUND

1st legs

30.06.00.....Djibouti-Burundi.....1-3
30.06.00.....Mauritania-Burkina Faso.....0-0
01.07.00.....Botswana-Madagascar.....1-0
01.07.00.....Gambia-Guinea.....2-2
01.07.00.....Rwanda-Congo.....2-1
01.07.00.....Sao Tome e Principe-Gabon.....1-1
01.07.00.....Seychelles-Zimbabwe.....0-1
01.07.00.....Tanzania-Mauritius.....0-1
01.07.00.....Uganda-Malawi.....3-1
02.07.00.....Benin-Namibia.....2-0
02.07.00.....Cape Verde Islands-Liberia.....1-0
02.07.00.....Central African Rep-DR Congo.....1-1
02.07.00.....Chad-Libya.....3-1
02.07.00.....Equatorial Guinea-Angola.....0-1
02.07.00.....Ethiopia-Zambia.....1-0
02.07.00.....Lesotho-Mozambique.....1-0
02.07.00.....Niger-Ivory Coast.....0-1
02.07.00.....Sudan-Eritrea.....5-1
02.07.00.....Swaziland-Kenya.....3-2

2nd legs

14.07.00.....Libya-Chad.....3-1
.....*Agg 4-4. Libya 8-7 on pens*
15.07.00.....Burundi-Djibouti.....1-0
.....*Burundi 4-1 on agg*
15.07.00.....Eritrea-Sudan.....2-1
.....*Sudan 6-3 on agg*
15.07.00.....Gabon-Sao Tome e Principe.....4-1
.....*Gabon 5-2 on agg*
15.07.00.....Kenya-Swaziland.....3-0
.....*Kenya 5-3 on agg*
15.07.00.....Madagascar-Botswana.....2-0
.....*Madagascar 2-1 on agg*
15.07.00.....Namibia-Benin.....8-2
.....*Namibia 8-4 on agg*
15.07.00.....Malawi-Uganda.....1-2
.....*Uganda 5-2 on agg*
15.07.00.....Zambia-Ethiopia.....2-0
.....*Zambia 2-1 on agg*
16.07.00.....Angola-Equatorial Guinea.....4-1
.....*Angola 5-1 on agg*
16.07.00.....Burkina Faso-Mauritania.....3-0
.....*Burkina Faso 3-0 on agg*
16.07.00.....Congo-Rwanda.....5-1
.....*Congo 6-3 on agg*
16.07.00.....DR Congo-Central African Rep.....2-0
.....*DR Congo 3-1 on agg*
16.07.00.....Guinea-Gambia.....2-0
.....*Guinea 4-2 on agg*
16.07.00.....Ivory Coast-Niger.....6-0
.....*Ivory Coast 7-0 on agg*
16.07.00.....Liberia-Cape Verde Islands.....3-0
.....*Liberia 3-1 on agg*
16.07.00.....Mauritius-Tanzania.....3-2
.....*Mauritius 4-2 on agg*
16.07.00.....Mozambique-Lesotho.....1-0
.....*Agg 1-1. Lesotho 3-2 on pens*
16.07.00.....Zimbabwe-Seychelles.....5-0
.....*Zimbabwe 6-0 on agg*

Guinea-Bissau withdrew; Morocco walkover

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Group 1

July 22: Mamelodi Sundowns (SAf) 2 Africa Sports (IvC) 0.
July 23: Esperance (Tun) 4 Sable de Batie (Cam) 0.
Remaining fixtures
Aug 6: Africa Sports v Esperance; Sable de Batie v Mamelodi Sundowns.
Aug 19: Esperance v Mamelodi Sundowns; Sable de Batie v Africa Sports.
Oct 14: Mamelodi Sundowns v Esperance.
Oct 15: Africa Sports v Sable de Batie.
Oct 29: Africa Sports v Mamelodi Sundowns; Sable de Batie v Esperance.
Nov 11: Esperance v Africa Sports; Mamelodi Sundowns v Sable de Batie.

Group 2

July 22: Lobi Stars (Nig) 3 Jeanne d'Arc (Sen) 1.
July 23: Hearts of Oak (Gha) 2 Al Ahly (Egy) 1.

Remaining fixtures
Aug 4: Al Ahly v Lobi Stars.
Aug 5: Jeanne d'Arc v Hearts of Oak.
Aug 20: Jeanne d'Arc v Al Ahly; Lobi Stars v Hearts of Oak.
Oct 13: Al Ahly v Jeanne d'Arc.
Oct 15: Hearts of Oak v Lobi Stars.
Oct 27: Al Ahly v Hearts of Oak.
Oct 28: Jeanne d'Arc v Lobi Stars.
Nov 11: Hearts of Oak v Jeanne d'Arc; Lobi Stars v Al Ahly.

ASIA

JAPAN

SECOND STAGE

June 24: FC Tokyo 3 Yokohama F Marinos 0; Cerezo Osaka 3 Shimizu S-Pulse 1; Kashiwa Reysol 2 Jubilo Iwata 1; Kyoto Purple Sanga 3 JEF United Ichihara 2; Kawasaki Frontale 0 Avispa Fukuoka 1; Nagoya Grampus Eight 0 Kashima Antlers 3; Gamba Osaka 2 Verdy Kawasaki 1; Sanfrecce Hiroshima 1 Vissel Kobe 0.
July 1: Cerezo Osaka 2 Kyoto Purple Sanga 0; Vissel Kobe 1 Gamba Osaka 3; Kashima Antlers 4 Kawasaki Frontale 0; Avispa Fukuoka 0 FC Tokyo 1 (aet); Yokohama F Marinos 0 Shimizu S-Pulse 1; Jubilo Iwata 5 Nagoya Grampus Eight 1; Verdy Kawasaki 1 Kashiwa Reysol 0; JEF United Ichihara 2 Sanfrecce Hiroshima 2.
July 8: Kashima Antlers 2 Jubilo Iwata 1; Gamba Osaka 1 JEF United Ichihara 0; FC Tokyo 3 Kawasaki Frontale 0; Sanfrecce Hiroshima 3 Cerezo Osaka 1; Shimizu S-Pulse 0 Avispa Fukuoka 1; Kyoto Purple Sanga 1 Yokohama F Marinos 3; Kashiwa Reysol 3 Vissel Kobe 2 (aet); Nagoya Grampus Eight 2 Verdy Kawasaki 2.

JAPAN – SECOND STAGE

	P	W1	W2	D	L	F	A	Pts
Kashima Antlers	3	3	0	0	0	9	1	9
Gamba Osaka	3	3	0	0	0	6	2	9
FC Tokyo	3	2	1	0	0	8	1	8
Sanfrecce H	3	2	0	1	0	6	3	7
Cerezo Osaka	3	2	0	0	1	6	4	6
Avispa Fukuoka	3	2	0	0	1	3	2	6
Kashiwa Reysol	3	1	1	0	1	5	4	5
Verdy Kawasaki	3	1	0	1	1	4	4	4
Jubilo Iwata	3	1	0	0	2	7	5	3
Yokohama FM	3	1	0	0	2	3	5	3
Shimizu S-Pulse	3	1	0	0	2	2	4	3
Kyoto PS	3	1	0	0	2	4	7	3
JEF United	3	0	0	1	2	4	6	1
Grampus Eight	3	0	0	1	2	3	10	1
Vissel Kobe	3	0	0	0	3	3	7	0
Kawasaki Frontale	3	0	0	0	3	0	8	0

W1 = win in 90 mins (3 pts); W2 = win in extra time (2 pts); Draw = 1 pt

WORLD CUP QUALIFIERS

AFRICA

SECOND ROUND

Group A: Angola, Cameroon, Libya, Togo, Zambia.

18.06.00.....Angola-Zambia.....2-1
18.06.00.....Libya-Cameroon.....0-3
08.07.00.....Zambia-Togo.....2-0
09.07.00.....Cameroon-Angola.....3-0
28.01.01.....Angola-Libya
28.01.01.....Togo-Cameroon
25.02.01.....Cameroon-Zambia
25.02.01.....Libya-Togo
10.03.01.....Zambia-Libya
11.03.01.....Togo-Angola
21.04.01.....Zambia-Angola
22.04.01.....Cameroon-Libya
06.05.01.....Angola-Cameroon
06.05.01.....Togo-Zambia
01.07.01.....Cameroon-Togo
01.07.01.....Libya-Angola
14.07.01.....Zambia-Cameroon
15.07.01.....Togo-Libya
29.07.01.....Angola-Togo
29.07.01.....Libya-Zambia

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Cameroon	2	2	0	0	6	0	6
Zambia	2	1	0	1	3	2	3
Angola	2	1	0	1	2	4	3
Togo	1	0	0	1	0	2	0
Libya	1	0	0	1	0	3	0

Group B: Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Sudan.

17.06.00.....Nigeria-Sierra Leone.....2-0
18.06.00.....Sudan-Liberia.....2-0
09.07.00.....Ghana-Sierra Leone.....5-0
09.07.00.....Liberia-Nigeria.....2-1
27.01.01.....Ghana-Liberia
27.01.01.....Nigeria-Sudan
25.02.01.....Liberia-Sierra Leone
25.02.01.....Sudan-Ghana
10.03.01.....Ghana-Nigeria
10.03.01.....Sierra Leone-Sudan
21.04.01.....Sierra Leone-Nigeria
22.04.01.....Liberia-Sudan
05.05.01.....Sierra Leone-Ghana
05.05.01.....Nigeria-Liberia
01.07.01.....Liberia-Ghana
01.07.01.....Sudan-Nigeria
14.07.01.....Ghana-Sudan
14.07.01.....Sierra Leone-Liberia
28.07.01.....Nigeria-Ghana
29.07.01.....Sudan-Sierra Leone

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Ghana	1	1	0	0	5	0	3
Sudan	1	1	0	0	2	0	3
Nigeria	2	1	0	1	3	2	3
Liberia	2	1	0	1	2	3	3
Sierra Leone	2	0	0	2	0	7	0

Group C: Algeria, Egypt, Morocco, Namibia, Senegal.

16.06.00.....Algeria-Senegal.....1-1
17.06.00.....Namibia-Morocco.....0-0
09.07.00.....Morocco-Algeria.....2-1
09.07.00.....Senegal-Egypt.....0-0
26.01.01.....Algeria-Namibia
26.01.01.....Egypt-Morocco
24.02.01.....Morocco-Senegal
24.02.01.....Namibia-Egypt
09.03.01.....Egypt-Algeria
11.03.01.....Senegal-Namibia
21.04.01.....Morocco-Namibia
22.04.01.....Senegal-Algeria
04.05.01.....Algeria-Morocco
04.05.01.....Egypt-Senegal
30.06.01.....Morocco-Egypt
30.06.01.....Namibia-Algeria
13.07.01.....Egypt-Namibia
15.07.01.....Senegal-Morocco
27.07.01.....Algeria-Egypt
27.07.01.....Namibia-Senegal

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Morocco	2	1	1	0	2	1	4
Senegal	2	0	2	0	1	1	2
Egypt	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
Namibia	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
Algeria	2	0	1	1	2	3	1

Group D: Congo, DR Congo, Ivory Coast, Madagascar, Tunisia.

18.06.00 .....Ivory Coast-Tunisia.....2-2
18.06.00 .....Madagascar-DR Congo.....3-0
08.07.00.....Tunisia-Madagascar.....1-0
09.07.00.....DR Congo-Congo 2-0
28.01.01.....Congo-Tunisia
28.01.01.....Madagascar-Ivory Coast
24.02.01.....Tunisia-DR Congo
25.02.01.....Ivory Coast-Congo
11.03.01.....Congo-Madagascar
11.03.01.....DR Congo-Ivory Coast
21.04.01.....Tunisia-Ivory Coast
22.04.01.....DR Congo-Madagascar
06.05.01.....Congo-DR Congo
06.05.01.....Madagascar-Tunisia
30.06.01.....Tunisia-Congo
01.07.01.....Ivory Coast-Madagascar
15.07.01.....Congo-Ivory Coast
15.07.01.....DR Congo-Tunisia
29.07.01.....Ivory Coast-DR Congo
29.07.01.....Madagascar-Congo

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Tunisia	2	1	1	0	3	2	4
Madagascar	2	1	0	1	3	1	3
DR Congo	2	1	0	1	2	3	3
Ivory Coast	1	0	1	0	2	2	1
Congo	1	0	0	1	0	2	0

Group E: Burkina Faso, Guinea, Malawi, South Africa, Zimbabwe.

17.06.00 .....Malawi-Burkina Faso 1-1
18.06.00 .....Guinea-Zimbabwe 3-0
09.07.00 .....Burkina Faso-Guinea.....2-3
09.07.00 .....Zimbabwe-South Africa.....abandoned
27.01.01 .....South Africa-Burkina Faso
28.01.01 .....Guinea-Malawi
24.02.01 .....Malawi-South Africa
25.02.01 .....Burkina Faso-Zimbabwe
10.03.01 .....South Africa-Guinea
11.03.01 .....Zimbabwe-Malawi
21.04.01 .....Burkina Faso-Malawi
22.04.01 .....Zimbabwe-Guinea
05.05.01 .....South Africa-Zimbabwe
06.05.01 .....Guinea-Burkina Faso
30.06.01 .....Malawi-Guinea
01.07.01 .....Burkina Faso-South Africa
14.07.01 .....South Africa-Malawi
15.07.01 .....Zimbabwe-Burkina Faso
28.07.01 .....Malawi-Zimbabwe
29.07.01 .....Guinea-South Africa

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Guinea	2	2	0	0	6	2	6
Malawi	1	0	1	0	1	1	1
Burkina Faso	2	0	1	1	3	4	1
South Africa	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Zimbabwe	1	0	0	1	0	3	0

The five group winners qualify for the finals.

THE FOOTBALL CONFEDERATION

3 teams qualify

PRELIMINARY PHASE

Central American Zone Group A

El Salvador, Belize, Guatemala

05.03.00 .....El Salvador-Belize 5-0
19.03.00 .....*Belize-Guatemala 1-2
02.04.00 .....Guatemala-El Salvador.....0-1
16.04.00 .....Belize-El Salvador 1-3
07.05.00 .....El Salvador-Guatemala.....1-1
20.05.00 .....**Guatemala-Belize 0-0
**In Panama City*
***In Tegucigalpa, Honduras*

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
El Salvador	4	3	1	0	10	2	10
Guatemala	4	1	2	1	3	3	5
Belize	4	0	1	3	2	10	1

Central American Zone Group B

Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama

04.03.00 .....Honduras-Nicaragua 3-0
19.03.00 .....Nicaragua-Panama 0-2
02.04.00 .....Panama-Honduras 1-0
16.04.00 .....Nicaragua-Honduras 0-1
07.05.00 .....Honduras-Panama 3-1
21.05.00 .....Panama-Nicaragua 4-0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Panama	4	3	0	1	8	3	9
Honduras	4	3	0	1	7	2	9
Nicaragua	4	0	0	4	0	10	0

Group winners qualified for the overall confederation semi-final round. Group A runners-up played off against Caribbean Zone Group 2 runners-up for a semi-final round place; Group B runners-up played off against Caribbean Zone Group 3 runners-up for a semi-final round place.

Caribbean Zone first round

Group 1
05.03.00.....Cuba-Cayman Islands.....4-0
19.03.00.....Cayman Islands-Cuba.....0-0
.....*Cuba 4-0 on agg*
05.03.00.....St Lucia-Surinam.....1-0
19.03.00.....Surinam-St Lucia .....(aet) 1-0
.....*Agg 1-1. Surinam 3-1 on pens*
05.03.00.....Barbados-Grenada 2-2
18.03.00.....Grenada-Barbados 2-3
.....*Barbados 5-4 on agg*
11.03.00.....Aruba-Puerto Rico 4-2
18.03.00.....Puerto Rica-Aruba 2-2
.....*Aruba 6-4 on agg*

Group 2
05.03.00.....St Vincent-US Virgin Islands.....9-0
19.03.00.....US Virgin Islands-St Vincent.....1-5
.....*St Vincent 14-1 on agg*
05.03.00.....British Virgin Is-Bermuda 1-5
19.03.00.....Bermuda-British Virgin Is 9-0
.....*Bermuda 14-1 on agg*
18.03.00.....St Kitts-Turks & Caicos Is.....8-0
21.03.00.....Turks & Caicos Is-St Kitts* 0-6
.....*St Kitts 14-0 on agg*
Guyana v Antigua & Barbuda – Guyana suspended by FIFA; Antigua & Barbuda went through to second round.
**2nd leg also played in St Kitts*

Group 3
04.03.00.....Trinidad & Tob-Dutch Antilles 5-0
18.03.00.....Dutch Antilles-Trinidad & Tob 1-1
.....*Trinidad & Tobago 6-1 on agg*
05.03.00.....Anguilla-Bahamas 1-3
19.03.00.....Bahamas-Anguilla 2-1
.....*Bahamas 5-2 on agg*
05.03.00.....Dominican Rep-Montserrat 3-0
19.03.00.....Montserrat-Dominican Rep 1-3
.....*Dominican Republic 6-1 on agg*
11.03.00.....Haiti-Dominica.....4-0
19.03.00.....Dominica-Haiti.....1-3
.....*Haiti 7-1 on agg*

Caribbean Zone second round

Group 1
01.04.00.....Aruba-Barbados 1-3
16.04.00.....Barbados-Aruba 4-0
.....*Barbados 7-1 on agg*
02.04.00.....Cuba-Surinam 1-0
16.04.00.....Surinam-Cuba 0-0
.....*Cuba 1-0 on agg*

Group 2
16.04.00.....Antigua & Barbuda-Bermuda 0-0
23.04.00.....Bermuda-Antigua & Barbuda 1-1
.....*Agg 1-1. Antigua & Barbuda on away gls*
16.04.00.....St Vincent-St Kitts 1-0
23.04.00.....St Kitts-St Vincent 1-2
.....*St Vincent 3-1 on agg*

Group 3
01.04.00.....Haiti-Bahamas.....9-0
16.04.00.....Bahamas-Haiti.....0-4
.....*Haiti 13-0 on agg*
02.04.00.....Trinidad & Tob-Dominican Rep 3-0
16.04.00.....Dominican Rep-Trinidad & Tob 0-1
.....*Trinidad & Tobago 4-0 on agg*

Caribbean Zone finals

Group 1
07.05.00.....Cuba-Barbados.....1-1
21.05.00.....Barbados-Cuba.....1-1
.....*Agg 2-2. Barbados 5-4 on pens*

Group 2
07.05.00.....Antigua & Barbuda-St Vincent.....2-1
21.05.00.....St Vincent-Antigua & Barbuda.....4-0
.....*St Vincent 5-2 on agg*

Group 3
07.05.00.....Trinidad & Tobago-Haiti 3-1
19.05.00.....Haiti-Trinidad & Tobago 1-1
.....*Trinidad & Tobago 4-2 on agg*

The three Finals winners qualified for the overall confederation semi-final round.
Group 1 runners-up played off against Canada for a semi-final round place; Group 2 runners-up played off against Central American Zone Group A runners-up for a semi-final round place; Group 3 runners-up played off against Central American Zone Group B runners-up for a semi-final round place.

INTER-ZONE PLAY-OFFS

04.06.00.....Cuba-Canada.....0-1
11.06.00.....Canada-Cuba.....0-0
.....*Canada 1-0 on agg*

11.06.00.....Antigua & Barbuda-Guatemala.....0-1
17.06.00.....Guatemala-Antigua & Barbuda.....8-1
.....*Guatemala 9-1 on agg*

03.06.00.....Honduras-Haiti 4-0
17.06.00.....Haiti-Honduras 1-3
.....*Honduras 7-1 on agg*

SEMI-FINAL ROUND

Costa Rica, Jamaica, Mexico and the USA qualified directly for the semi-final round.

Group C

16.07.00.....Canada-Trinidad & Tobago.....0-2
16.07.00.....Panama-Mexico 0-1
23.07.00.....Panama-Canada.....0-0
23.07.00.....Trinidad & Tobago-Mexico 1-0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Trinidad & Tob	2	2	0	0	3	0	6
Mexico	2	1	0	1	1	1	3
Panama	2	0	1	1	0	1	1
Canada	2	0	1	1	0	2	1

Group D

16.07.00.....El Salvador-Honduras.....2-5
16.07.00.....St Vincent-Jamaica 0-1
23.07.00.....El Salvador-St Vincent.....7-1
23.07.00.....Jamaica-Honduras.....3-1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Jamaica	2	2	0	0	4	1	6
El Salvador	2	1	0	1	9	6	3
Honduras	2	1	0	1	6	5	3
St Vincent	2	0	0	2	1	8	0

Group E

16.07.00.....Barbados-Costa Rica.....2-1
16.07.00.....Guatemala-USA 1-1
22.07.00.....Guatemala-Barbados.....2-0
23.07.00.....Costa Rica-USA 2-1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Guatemala	2	1	1	0	3	1	4
Costa Rica	2	1	0	1	3	3	3
Barbados	2	1	0	1	2	3	3
USA	2	0	1	1	2	3	1

SOUTH AMERICA

28.03.00.....Colombia-Brazil.....0-0
29.03.00.....Argentina-Chile 4-1
29.03.00.....Ecuador-Venezuela 2-0
29.03.00.....Peru-Paraguay 2-0
29.03.00.....Uruguay-Bolivia.....1-0
26.04.00.....Bolivia-Colombia 1-1
26.04.00.....Brazil-Ecuador.....3-2
26.04.00.....Chile-Peru 1-1
26.04.00.....Paraguay-Uruguay.....1-0
26.04.00.....Venezuela-Argentina.....0-4
03.06.00.....Paraguay-Ecuador.....3-1
03.06.00.....Uruguay-Chile.....2-1
04.06.00.....Argentina-Bolivia.....1-0
04.06.00.....Colombia-Venezuela.....3-0
04.06.00.....Peru-Brazil 0-1
28.06.00.....Brazil-Uruguay 1-1
28.06.00.....Venezuela-Bolivia.....4-2
29.06.00.....Chile-Paraguay.....3-1
29.06.00.....Colombia-Argentina 1-3
29.06.00.....Ecuador-Peru 2-1
18.07.00.....Paraguay-Brazil.....2-1
18.07.00.....Uruguay-Venezuela 3-1
19.07.00.....Argentina-Ecuador 2-0
19.07.00.....Bolivia-Chile 1-0
19.07.00.....Peru-Colombia.....0-1
25.07.00.....Ecuador-Colombia
25.07.00.....Uruguay-Peru
25.07.00.....Venezuela-Chile
26.07.00.....Brazil-Argentina
27.07.00.....Bolivia-Paraguay
15.08.00.....Chile-Brazil
15.08.00.....Colombia-Uruguay
16.08.00.....Argentina-Paraguay
16.08.00.....Ecuador-Bolivia
16.08.00.....Peru-Venezuela
02.09.00.....Chile-Colombia
02.09.00.....Paraguay-Venezuela
03.09.00.....Brazil-Bolivia
03.09.00.....Peru-Argentina
03.09.00.....Uruguay-Ecuador
07.10.00.....Colombia-Paraguay
08.10.00 .....Argentina-Uruguay
08.10.00.....Bolivia-Peru
08.10.00.....Ecuador-Chile
08.10.00.....Venezuela-Brazil
14.11.00.....Brazil-Colombia
14.11.00.....Paraguay-Peru
15.11.00.....Bolivia-Uruguay
15.11.00.....Chile-Argentina
15.11.00.....Venezuela-Ecuador
27.03.01.....Argentina-Venezuela
27.03.01.....Ecuador-Brazil
27.03.01.....Peru-Chile
28.03.01.....Colombia-Bolivia
28.03.01.....Uruguay-Paraguay
24.04.01.....Chile-Uruguay
24.04.01.....Ecuador-Paraguay
24.04.01.....Venezuela-Colombia
25.04.01.....Bolivia-Argentina
25.04.01.....Brazil-Peru
02.06.01.....Paraguay-Chile
02.06.01.....Peru-Ecuador
03.06.01.....Argentina-Colombia
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15.08.01.....Colombia-Peru
15.08.01.....Ecuador-Argentina
04.09.01.....Chile-Venezuela
04.09.01.....Peru-Uruguay
05.09.01.....Argentina-Brazil
05.09.01.....Colombia-Ecuador
05.09.01.....Paraguay-Bolivia
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07.11.01.....Bolivia-Brazil
07.11.01.....Colombia-Chile
07.11.01.....Ecuador-Uruguay
07.11.01.....Venezuela-Paraguay
14.11.01.....Brazil-Venezuela
14.11.01.....Chile-Ecuador
14.11.01.....Paraguay-Colombia
14.11.01.....Peru-Bolivia
14.11.01.....Uruguay-Argentina

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Argentina	5	5	0	0	14	2	15
Uruguay	5	3	1	1	7	4	10
Paraguay	5	3	0	2	7	7	9
Colombia	5	2	2	1	6	4	8
Brazil	5	2	2	1	6	5	8
Ecuador	5	2	0	3	7	9	6
Peru	5	1	1	3	4	5	4
Chile	5	1	1	3	6	9	4
Bolivia	5	1	1	3	4	7	4
Venezuela	5	1	0	4	5	14	3

Round-robin league system. Top four teams qualify automatically for the finals. Fifth-placed team play off against winners of Oceania section for a place in the finals.

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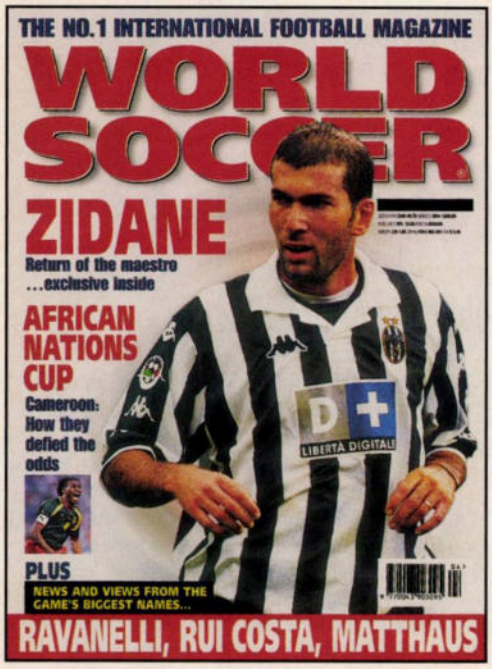

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It's spend, spend, spend for empire-building Cragnotti

Veron inquiry won't hold back the Lazio owner's ambitions, writes Paddy Agnew

WHEREVER you have looked, it has been hard to get away from Lazio boss Sergio Cragnotti this summer. The man who masterminded Lazio's rise and rise from Serie B to last season's title success continued to make waves during the off-season, either through an impressive £110million-worth of market activity at press time or through his associations with the case of Lazio's talented Argentine midfielder Juan Sebastian Veron, accused of producing false documentation during his Italian naturalisation process last autumn.

Those who suspected that Lazio's centenary year title success last season would be a flash in the pan, temporarily interrupting the Juventus-Milan hold on the championship, had reason to pause for thought when the Roman club launched an aggressive mid-summer transfer market campaign.

Just when one expected last season's vanquished – Juve, Milan, Inter, Roma, Parma and Fiorentina – to dominate the market in an attempt to rebuild a championship-challenging squad, it was Lazio who led the way. Inspired by the Cragnotti motto of "being out there in the marketplace looking for the best of the best", Lazio pulled off the biggest coup of the summer (so far) by signing Parma's much sought-after Argentine striker Hernan Crespo for the equivalent of £37m.

Add on the purchases of Inter keeper Angelo Peruzzi, Argentina and Valencia striker Claudio Lopez, and Holland and Barcelona winger Boudewijn Zenden and by mid-July, Lazio had already spent £71m. (Strictly speaking, they had obviously spent less since the Crespo deal, for instance, involved the sale to Parma of Portuguese winger Sergio Conceicao and Argentine midfielder Matias Almeyda, valued at £10m and £15m respectively.)

Not only have Lazio strengthened their already powerful squad but they have also definitively underlined the ambitions and seriousness of intent of their successful owner. Wanting to be the very best has been something of a Cragnotti leitmotif since he bought Lazio in February 1992 from Gian Marco Calleri for £15m.

Wanting Lazio to prove themselves a commercial success has been an even more important aspect of the Cragnotti administration. A trained accountant turned entrepreneurial financier, Cragnotti's commercial speciality has usually meant buying cheap and selling expensive.

For the time being, there is no indication that he wants to sell Lazio but if he did, he could probably ask for up to 20 times what he forked out for the club eight years ago. Such a sale would certainly represent a major return on his estimated £225m investment to date.

Cragnotti's administration has always been based on the premise that Lazio should be run as a commercial business and not, as in the case of so many other big clubs in Italy, as the private plaything of a mega-millionaire, such as petrol tycoon Massimo Moratti at Inter, the Fiat-owning Agnelli family at Juventus or media mogul Silvio Berlusconi at Milan.

"In Italy, football is still seen as the plaything of the rich and not as part of the entertainment industry," Cragnotti told Italian daily *La Repubblica* earlier this summer. "This is simply an old-fashioned mentality which, fortunately for us, still prevails – I say fortunately because otherwise we would not have been able to overturn the established power balance with the northern clubs.

"In an epoch of globalisation when people have ever more leisure time, football is the most global business of the lot. You tell me the name of any other product that is bought off the shelf by three billion consumers. Not even Coca-Cola comes close to it."

In keeping with his commercial plans for the club, Cragnotti made history in May 1998 when Lazio became the first Italian club to float on the Milan stock exchange (49.5 per cent of the club shares were made available in the public offer; the rest remain in the hands of the Cragnotti-controlled Cirio company).

That flotation, too, appears to have been a financial success since shares that originally cost £1.45 are now worth £3.50 (at times they have neared the £6 mark over the past two years).

In the middle...controversy rages over Veron's bid to become an Italian citizen

Cragnotti's business empire is based on his 1988-founded merchant bank, Cragnotti & Partners Capital Investment. Based largely in Latin America during the 1970s, Cragnotti worked his way up through the ranks, first with Bomprini Parodi Delfino and then for the Ferruzzi and Montedison chemical and foodstuff giants, before branching out on his own in 1988.

Even an alleged role in the 'Enimont' affair, one of the largest Italian public funds scandals of the post-war era, could not stop his rise and rise. Arrested briefly in 1993, within the ambit of Italy's infamous 'Tangentopoli' corruption investigation, Cragnotti spent only a matter of hours in detention before successfully clearing his name.

Since then, Cragnotti & Partners have gone on to build up a giant food processing empire comprising Cirio, Del Monte and Rome's Centrale del Latte (the latter was recently sold to footballing rival, Parmalat, owner of Parma, for £34m). The formerly state-owned Cirio group alone employs 11,000 and had a 1999 turnover of some £740m.

In an otherwise all-successful summer, even an ongoing investigation into alleged irregularities in the Italian naturalisation process of Lazio midfielder Veron has failed to upset Cragnotti.

For the past six months, Rome public prosecutor Silverio Piro has been inquiring into Veron's acquisition of Italian citizenship last September. In common with many Argentine players in Italy, Veron had asked for Italian citizenship so that he might be classified as a European Union citizen and therefore be exempt from the Italian federation ruling that precludes the use of more than three non-EU players per match.

In mid-July, Piro indicated that in October he will apply to have Cragnotti, Veron and other Lazio officials brought to trial to face forgery charges. The prosecutor may also want to press charges against Veron's agents, Gustavo Miscardi and Francisco Hildago, as well as against the Buenos Aires legal firm, Alvarez, which partly handled Veron's naturalisation process.

Veron applied for Italian naturalisation last autumn in the belief that his maternal great-great grandmother had emigrated from Calabria to Argentina in the early 1920s. Piro, however, alleges that in the absence of solid documentation to prove Veron's Calabrian origins, papers were forged. The state prosecutor does not have the power to bring the parties to court but must first apply to a preliminary hearing judge for a ruling on whether or not there is a case to answer.

If it transpired that Veron's naturalisation documentation is false, then, strictly speaking, Lazio would have broken Italian federation rules in at least 19 Serie A games last season when Veron played along with three non-EU players from the quartet of Croat Alen Boksic, Yugoslav Dejan Stankovic, Chilean Marcelo Salas and Czech Pavel Nedved.

For the time being, the federation has taken no action with regard to the matter but may well request full documentation from the public prosecutor when the preliminary hearing sits in October. Only then, and only if another club files a formal protest, would the federation take into consideration the unlikely eventuality of stripping Lazio of their newly-won title.

'The public prosecutor alleges that papers were forged in order to prove Veron's Italian origins'

Cragnotti has consistently argued the club's innocence, pointing out that Lazio did not themselves handle Veron's naturalisation process. He said: "They want to take the title from us? They can do everything. I am not worried."

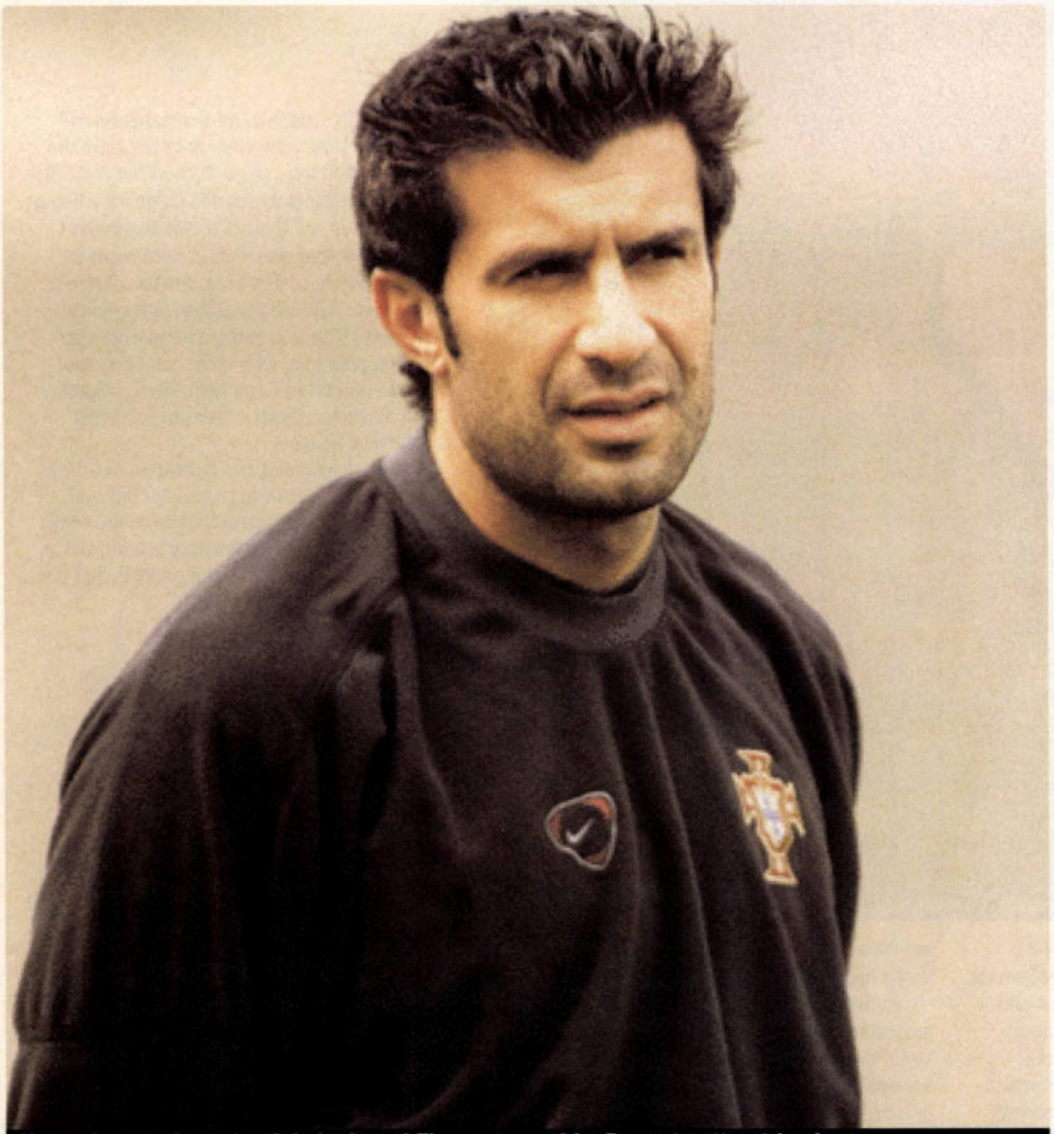
Lazio's lawyer Ugo Longo also strenuously defended the club, saying: "We are very pleased that the state prosecutor will hear testimony from Sgr Cragnotti on July 17. Our line of defence is unchanged – if documents were falsified, then we were the first to be cheated and the first to demand a clarification of the whole business."

Whatever the outcome of the Veron inquiry, the new season is already looking good for Lazio. In a further indication of long-term ambitions, Cragnotti also announced in July that he had bought one of the most sought-after Italian midfielders, Euro 2000 star Stefano Fiore, from Udinese.

Fiore, purchased along with Udinese midfield team-mate Giuliano Giannichedda for a total fee of £24m, will join Lazio at the beginning of the 2001-02 season. By then, Lazio may well be reigning European champions. That is certainly the Cragnotti gameplan.

Figo or bust for Perez

Outsider storms Real election and promises fans Luis Figo or their money back



Vote winner...the potential signing of Figo was used by Perez to attract backers

FOUR DAYS was all it took Florentino Perez to make a sensational impact on Spanish football. First the 53-year-old construction magnate outmanoeuvred incumbent president Lorenzo Sanz in Real Madrid's presidential elections; then he claimed to have smashed the world transfer record in signing Luis Figo from Barcelona for £40million.

Perez, the apparent outsider in the election race because Sanz had presided over last term's Champions League triumph, had used the capture of the Portugal forward as a persuasive attraction for voting members. Indeed, he offered to refund the cost of season tickets if Figo did not join Madrid. Perez also campaigned shrewdly for postal ballots, a move that made almost all the difference in his poll victory.

One man delighted to see Sanz kicked out was John Toshack, whom the outgoing president had sacked at the start of the year. Toshack said: "Every pig gets his comeuppance in the end. The result didn't surprise me. It was a really dumb move calling elections early."

As for Figo, Madrid – or, at least, Perez – had agreed during negotiations with the player's agent to pay Barcelona's erstwhile skipper some £4m-a-year for each season of a six-year contract, and also reimburse him for activating the £40m get-out clause in his contract with the furious but leaderless Catalans.

The world transfer record had been the property of Internazionale's £31m Christian Vieri until a month earlier when Lazio splashed £37m in cash and players on Parma's Argentinian striker Hernan Crespo.

Long-term Madrid watchers will have had a mixed impression of Perez so far. He campaigned effectively by blaming Sanz for the club's £250m debt and chaotic administration, yet simultaneously went out on a financial limb for Figo and even talked airily about also signing Zinedine Zidane from Juve.

If the Figo deal were to be confirmed – and Barcelona's own presidential election campaigners had their own view on that score – then Nicolas Anelka would have to be sacrificed. Not a bad swap, particularly when Paris Saint-Germain were battering Madrid's door down for the grumpy striker.

PSG, remarkably, appeared prepared to invest all their forthcoming Champions League earnings, and a lot more besides, in paying Madrid almost all the £23m the Spaniards had paid Arsenal for the Frenchman last year.

Barcelona were not far behind Madrid – one week in fact – in staging their own presidential election, following the departure of long-time leader Josep Lluis Nunez. He stepped down after the Champions League semi-final collapse against Valencia. Coach Louis Van Gaal followed him, of course.

The ensuing power vacuum significantly weakened Barcelona since no one was around to direct the usual summer transfer campaign. Youth director Lorenzo Serra Ferrer was pressed into taking over as coach, but quite what sort of squad he will launch into the new season was open to doubt.

There was major uncertainty over the future of Rivaldo, who has been growing ever more impatient to see Barcelona give him the £1m pay rise he claims Nunez promised him last season. Rivaldo said: "I want to stay in Barcelona because I love the club and the city, but I want to be paid what I was promised."

Milan, Juventus and Lazio have all openly announced their admiration for the Brazilian. It may have been an ominous sign that, when Rivaldo flew to his homeland for World Cup qualifiers/summer

holiday he put all his furniture into storage while a local Barcelona estate agent sued him for non-payment of rent.

Big-money transfers do not always work out as planned, of course. As Madrid and Barcelona fought out their multi-million battles, so a poignant reminder of the other side of the coin was provided by Denilson's low-key return home to Brazil from Betis.

The winger, who cost the Seville club a then world record £23m after the 1998 World Cup, has been loaned home to Flamengo while Betis struggle to regain their place in the Primera Liga. Denilson, who scored only five goals in his two seasons in Seville, said: "The truth is, the pressure at Betis was terrific and I wasn't ready to carry the weight of responsibility."

Another Brazilian forward on the move in Spain is Catanha, whom Malaga have sold to La Coruna for £8m. The deal took the champions' summer spending to £36m.

Catanha, 28, scored 24 goals in the top division last term after having been Second Division leading marksman the previous season with 26 goals. He is expected to gain added value shortly when he is granted Spanish citizenship.

La Coruna beat off competition from Fiorentina, Celta Vigo and Rangers to sign the Brazilian, who will fill the gap left by the absence this coming season of Dutchman Roy Makaay. He was seriously injured at Euro 2000. La Coruna have also signed goalkeeper Jose Francisco Molina, midfielder Juan Carlos Valeron and defender Joan Capdevilla for a total of £12.5m from relegated Atletico Madrid.

Keir Radnedge

Centre stage...Perez

Pro-file Iker Casillas

Teenage keeper following in a great Spanish tradition

SPAIN has produced some remarkable goalkeepers. Ricardo Zamora is still revered as one of the greatest of all time; Andoni Zubizarreta holds the Spanish international record of 129 caps; and the likes of Antonio Ramallets, Jose Angel Iribar and Luis Arconada have all rated among the best in Europe in their respective eras.

Now Real Madrid have, almost by accident, discovered a teenager who possesses the potential to emulate them all. He is Iker Casillas, who astonished Sir Alex Ferguson in Madrid's memorable Champions League quarter-final dismissal of Manchester United last season, and went on to play in Real's victory over Valencia in the Final. He ended the season as a non-playing member of Spain's squad at Euro 2000.

So much for the moaners who complain that the international free-for-all provoked by the Bosman judgment was shutting the door on the big countries' youth talents. But all those television and media analysts who claim to have just 'discovered' Casillas are revealing only their ignorance of the depth of the international game.

Casillas was born in Madrid on May 20, 1981, just a week before Real lost 1-0 to Liverpool in the European Cup Final in Paris. As a child his talent stood out. At a mere nine years old, Casillas already knew he wanted to be a star goalkeeper. He had adopted Denmark's Peter Schmeichel as his hero and was wanted by both Real and Barcelona.

His father turned down the latter and set his young son on an incredible ladder to stardom. As a teenager Casillas was Spain's goalkeeper when they won an Under-15 'Little World Cup' in Bolivia. At 16 he saved the decisive penalty to help Spain win the European youth title. At 17 he won a world youth title with Spain in Nigeria.

Shortly afterwards, in November 1997, Casillas was met out of school by a Real aide who told him that first-team coach Jupp Heynckes needed him to join the substitutes for a Champions League tie against Rosenborg. But it was not until two years and two weeks later that Casillas made his official debut, in a League match against Bilbao in the cauldron of San Mames.

Many far more experienced players have shrunk under the pressure in 'El Catedral'. Not Casillas. Madrid drew 2-2 and the young keeper was drenched in praise.

Not everyone was surprised. "Casillas is a phenomenon," said Madrid's goalkeeper coach Manuel Amiero. "He's big, strong, but is very quick and has great reflexes. Some people criticise him because he comes a long way for the ball sometimes, but if you watch you'll see how good his judgment is. When he comes out it's because he knows he can get the ball – and he does."

Paco Buyo, the former Madrid keeper and now third-team coach, agrees. He said: "Casillas has good technique, sound legs and the pace of an

outfield player. He's still a goalkeeping apprentice but his potential is as big as he is."

Casillas began this season as Madrid's No 3. Then German Bodo Illgner was injured and the Argentine Albano Bizarri turned in a string of disastrous displays, fumbling his way nervously through the World Club Championship. So Casillas was promoted to the first team this spring virtually by default.

Yet despite his unexpected run in the big time, nerves were not evident. "A lot of people think that because I'm still only 18 I'm going to struggle to keep my head in big matches," said Casillas, who turned 19 in May. "They don't know what they're talking about. I think I'm as good as most. A few months ago people said I was raw, that I wasn't up to it. Why? Because I let in five against Deportivo. Well, I wasn't as bad as they said then...and I'm not as good as the same people say now."

Some interviewers profess themselves a little disappointed by Casillas. He does not exude the pop idol, superstar image, he is still preparing to sit his business studies exams, he has a girlfriend and he likes going out with his old friends. Not that he sees as much of them now as he would like.

His fame has started to close the door on a normal life. It will be a long time before it opens again.

Keir Radnedge

Fact file

Club Real Madrid
Country Spain
Born May 20, 1981, in Madrid
International debut June 2000, v Sweden
International caps 2
Honours Champions League 2000

Monaco still look strong

Nick Bidwell looks at the contenders for the new French campaign

Moving to Monaco...Shabani Nonda has left Rennes

AUXERRE
The end of an era. After 37 years as coach, Guy Roux has moved upstairs to become Auxerre's general manager, with the club's former youth team boss Daniel Rolland taking charge of the first team. The latter intends to do things his way, meaning that Roux's cherished 4-3-3 formation and use of wingers may be ditched. It makes sense, since Auxerre's first-choice wide men, Bernard Diomede and Steve Marlet, have moved on, to Liverpool and Lyon respectively. Newcomers include ex-Sedan attacking midfielder Pierre Deblock and Under-21 central defender Jean-Alain Boumsong (Le Havre).

BASTIA
Every season many pundits predict relegation for the Corsicans, but every year the team confound the doubters with their spirit, togetherness and excellent home form. Two of their best players of last season, utility man Franck Jurietti and defender Zoumana Camara have left, for Monaco and Marseille, but they have signed an exciting attacking right-back, Brazilian Demetrius Ferreira.

BORDEAUX
The 'Bordelais' may struggle to rediscover the form that brought them the League title in 1999. They have been weakened by the sale of schemer Johan Micoud (Parma) and forward Sylvain Wiltord, who at press time was poised to join Arsenal. Although new recruits such as Under-21 central defender David Sommeil (Rennes) and Russian international midfielder Alexei Smertin (Lokomotiv Moscow) are both fine players, the consensus among the fans is that they have been short-changed in the transfer stakes. Now for the good news. Highly-rated keeper Ulrich Rame and classy defender Kodjo Afanou were persuaded to stay, and a front-line of Christophe Dugarry and Lilian Laslandes promises much.

GUINGAMP
Back in the top flight after a two-year absence, the Breton club's only objective this term is survival. This is achievable: they have an excellent young coach in Guy Lacombe; players with First Division experience in keeper Eric Loussouran, stopper Laurent Guyot, midfield dynamo Claude Michel and playmaker Abdelhafid Tasfaout; and the signing of former sweeper and skipper Hubert Fournier from Lyon also appears a good move. More of a risk is the purchase of well-travelled striker Bruno Rodriguez, whose career has gone off the boil in recent years.

LENS
The close season decision to axe coach Francois Brisson, who steered the club to the UEFA Cup semi-finals last term, and replace him with former Marseille boss Rolland Courbis was not popular with the fans. They remember Courbis, the archetypal Mediterranean character, calling them 'penguins' and their old mining town 'the North Pole' a few years ago. Despite selling midfield inspiration Olivier Dacourt to Leeds and chief striker Pascal Nouma to Besiktas, there remains enough class in the ranks for a top-six finish. Jose Pierre-Fanfan is an outstanding stopper, Lamine Sakho a promising attacker, and new signing Antoine Sibierski (Nantes) a top quality goalscoring midfielder.

LILLE
They ran away with the Second Division title last season, but money is short, the French League's financial watchdogs have placed restrictions on their spending, and the club's Bosnian coach, Vahid Halihodzic, has let it be known that he is not entirely satisfied with the squad. New faces include Albanian international midfielder Edwin Murati (Paris Saint-Germain), left-back Christophe Pignol (Monaco) and Danish striker Mikkel Beck (Derby).

LYON
Club president Jean-Michel Aulas was not a happy man last season. After forking out £24million on Brazilian striker Sonny Anderson, wing-back Pierre Laigle and forward Tony Vairelles, the team still lost in the qualifying round of the Champions League and finished only third in the domestic title race. However Aulas is determined that his team capture their first championship and has again been throwing his money around. He has recruited well, bringing in Cameroon midfielder Marc-Vivien Foe (West Ham), Belgian right-back Eric Deflandre (Club Brugge), Swiss midfield wonderkid Patrick Muller (Grasshopper), French international utility player Frederic Dehu (Barcelona) and winger Steve Marlet (Auxerre). After four years in charge, coach Bernard Lacombe has reverted to his old role of general manager and is replaced by ex-Saint-Etienne midfielder Jacques Santini.

MARSEILLE
After a turbulent 1999-2000 season, when the team flirted with relegation and the fans turned violently on the players, expectations are being scaled down these days. The club are heavily in debt, owner Robert Louis-Dreyfus has said he will no longer be pumping his own money into the coffers – in just three years he has invested £55m but still has no trophies to show for it – and every bankable playing asset has been cashed in. Robert Pires has headed for Arsenal, Peter Luccin and Stephane Dalmat are off to PSG, and keeper Stephane Porato on his way to Monaco. Newcomers like veteran Swedish ball-winner Klas Ingesson (Bologna), left-back Manuel Dos Santos (Montpellier) and central

defenders Bruno N'Gotty (Milan) and Zoumana Camara (Bastia) are just not the stars Marseille fans have grown accustomed to over the years. Marseille had hoped to replace unconvincing rookie coach Bernard Casoni with a big name such as Giovanni Trapattoni or Carlos Bianchi, but had to settle for the Brazilian Carlos Abel Braga (Vasco da Gama). Braga has wasted no time in signing a compatriot – midfielder Adriano from Atletico Paranaense.

METZ

The Lorraine club have been in the top flight for the past 33 years, but coach Joel Muller may face a struggle to maintain that run. Young attacker Louis Saha has moved to Fulham, with keeper Lionel Letizi off to PSG, and the loss of such key players has set the alarm bells ringing. Letizi's replacement is Colombian Farid Mondragon (Independiente, Arg), while their attack will be led by Argentinian Patricio D'Amico (Belgrano Cordoba).

MONACO

It is never easy for champions to defend their title, but paradoxically Monaco remain a good bet to dominate proceedings again. Although the departures included keeper Fabien Barthez (Man Utd), full-back Willy Sagnol (Bayern Munich), midfielder Sabri Lamouchi (Parma) and striker David Trezeguet (Juve), the powers-that-be at Monaco seem to have filled the gaps. They spent £14m on potent Congo forward Shabani Nonda (Rennes), versatile midfielder Franck Jurietti (Bastia), impressive Marseille keeper Stephane Porato and highly experienced midfielder Xavier Gravelaine (PSG). If Ludovic Giuly, Marcelo Gallardo and Marco Simone repeat last season's attacking magic, and promising youngsters like sweeper Philippe Christanval, stopper Rafael Marquez and midfielder John Arne Riise continue to flourish, the team should be real contenders.

NANTES

Nantes suffered a major loss when brilliant attacking midfielder Antoine Sibierski left for Lens, but two other first-team pillars, keeper Mickael Landreau and attacker Olivier Monterrubio, have remained loyal. The only new faces are defenders Nicolas Laspalles (PSG) and the Portuguese Mario Silva (Boavista).

PARIS SAINT-GERMAIN

PSG have enjoyed an excellent summer in the transfer market, buying two of France's best young midfielders, Peter Luccin and Stephane Dalmat, for £16m from Marseille. Lionel Letizi (Metz) is a more than capable successor to Bernard Lama in goal, and great things are expected of stopper Sylvain Distin from Second Division Gueugnon. Add the recruits to the established backbone of central defender Eric Rabesandratana, midfield creators Jay-Jay Okocha and Ali Benarbia, winger Laurent Robert and Brazilian striker Christian and you have a team to challenge seriously for honours.

RENNES

The Breton club may be in for a hard time this season after watching their two most influential players, African goalgetter Shabani Nonda and centre-back David Sommeil leave, for Monaco and Bordeaux respectively. On the other hand, Rennes have strengthened their midfield with the signings of the Brazilian Vander (Ponte Preta), Philippe Delaye (Montpellier) and Olivier Echouafni (Strasbourg), while Brazilian Cesar (PSG) has arrived to shore up the central defence. Former PSG and France captain Paul Le Guen remains as coach.

SAINT-ETIENNE

'Les Verts' have looked to Russian clubs for new talent this summer, picking up Russian international striker Alexander Panov from Zenit St Petersburg and Ukrainian keeper Maxym Levitskiy (Chernomorets). The latter was signed after Armenian goalkeeper Roman Berezovsky refused to honour a deal with the club. Despite the new signings, much depends on whether Saint-Etienne manage to hold on to much-coveted midfielder Stephane Pedron.

SEDAN

Have the Sedan board shot themselves in the foot by firing coach Patrick Remy, who led the newly-promoted team to a marvellous seventh-place finish last season? His replacement, Alex Dupont, who guided Second Division Gueugnon to League Cup success last spring, may find Remy a hard act to follow. Sedan will certainly miss midfielder Pierre Deblock (Auxerre). Fresh faces include a pair of Senegalese internationals, central defender Salif Diao and forward Moussa N'Diaye.

STRASBOURG

Strasbourg fans have grown used to new signings who fail to live up to expectations. So it is to be hoped that their new star recruit, ex-Sochaux forward Danijel Ljuboja, manages to buck the trend. Club president Patrick Proisy has warned that anything less than qualification for Europe will not be acceptable. He could be disappointed. Key men for 'the Alsatians' are sweeper Teddy Bertin, wing-back Fabrice Ehret and striker Guy Luyindula.

TOULOUSE

Toulouse, back in the top flight after a one-year absence, may be short on economic muscle, but in former France and Bordeaux midfielder Alain Giresse, they have a fine coach and inspirational figure. Giresse will be relying on golden oldie stopper William Prunier to repeat last season's excellent form and for solid contributions from new boys such as Argentine playmaker Dario Cabrol (Union Santa Fe), defensive midfielder Jean-Christophe Rouviere (Bordeaux), and Colombian forward Victor Bonilla (Real Sociedad).

TROYES

Coach Alain Perrin did a remarkable job in keeping his team's head above the relegation waters last season. But another life-saving operation is asking a lot, especially since excellent keeper Tony Heurtebis has moved back to Rennes and midfield warrior Emmanuel Rival said 'non' to the new contract offered him and left for Second Division Nimes. To stay afloat, Troyes need another pile of goals from veteran Yugoslav attacker Sladjan Djukic.

Heading for Paris...ex-Marseille midfielder Stephane Dalmat

Don't back against Bayern

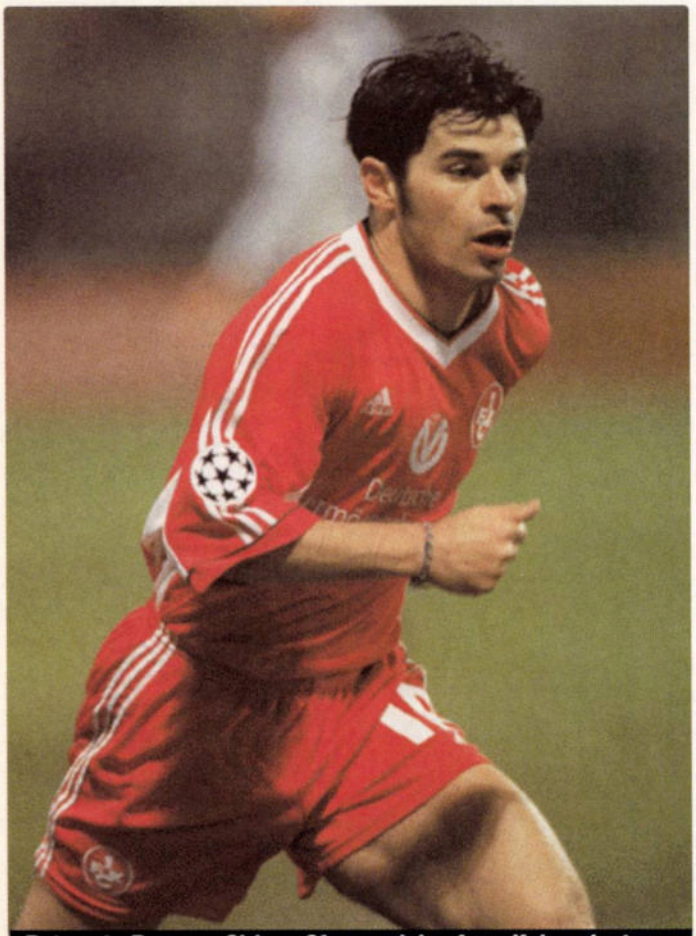
Nick Bidwell previews the Bundesliga campaign

BAYER LEVERKUSEN

It's now or never for coach Christoph Daum. Next year he takes the reins of the German national team and has just one season to fulfil his goal of leading Bayer to their first Bundesliga shield. It will not be easy. He must pick up his players after they threw away their chance of the title on the final weekend of last season and will have to reconstruct his midfield; Stefan Beinlich has left for Hertha and Emerson was set to move to Roma. New faces include another Brazilian midfielder, Marquinho (Sao Paulo), and ball-winner or libero Andreas Neuendorf (Hertha). But the key lies with established stars such as libero Jens Nowotny, midfielders Michael Ballack and Ze Roberto, and strikers Ulf Kirsten and Oliver Neuville.

BAYERN MUNICH

Bayern remain the team to beat, even though they would have preferred more reinforcements than midfielder Ciri Sforza, back for his second stint, from Kaiserslautern, and right-back Willy Sagnol (Monaco), to replace Liverpool-bound Markus Babbel. Keeper Oliver Kahn is arguably the only German international with his reputation intact after the Euro 2000 debacle, Bixente Lizarazu is one of the world's best left-backs, midfielders of the calibre of Stefan Effenberg, Jens Jeremies, Mehmet Scholl and Hasan Salihamidzic would walk into any Bundesliga side, while the Brazilians Elber and Paulo Sergio are excellent up front. No other club in Germany has Bayern's strength in depth. However, coach Ottmar Hitzfeld is worried that his team's German internationals may have been adversely affected by their Euro 2000 nightmare and he already has injury troubles with Effenberg (Achilles) and Elber (foot).



Return to Bayern...Ciriaco Sforza rejoins from Kaiserslautern

BOCHUM

Newly-promoted Bochum are the archetypal 'yo-yo' club, and despite having the wily Klaus Toppmoller as coach, may struggle to avoid the drop. New names on the roster are Croat midfielders Zoran Mamic (Leverkusen) and Damir Milinovic (Rijeka), and Hertha cast-offs Ante Covic, a winger, and Russian schemer Sergei Mandreko. Attacker Achim Weber and midfielder Peter Peschel, who scored 34 goals between them last term, continue to man the finishing department.

BORUSSIA DORTMUND

Last term was a disaster – top of the table in October, Dortmund then went 16 games without a win and only just stayed up. Three coaching regimes also came and went – Michael Skibbe, Bernd Krauss and the pairing of veteran boss Udo Lattek and ex-Dortmund and Germany libero Matthias Sammer – so a period of calm rebuilding was the priority. Sammer, in his first coaching role, now has sole charge but has not been overkeen to dip into the transfer market. While playmaker Andy Moller (Schalke) and Bosnian attacker Sergej Barbarez (Hamburg) have left, the only arrivals to date are back-up keeper Philipp Laux (Ulm) and Nigerian midfielder Sunday Oliseh (Juventus).

EINTRACHT FRANKFURT

For the second season running Eintracht cheated the relegation noose, and coach Felix Magath deserves much credit for refloating what seemed to be a sinking ship. He should not have to worry unduly this term. In excellent keeper Dirk Heinen, talented midfielders Horst Heldt, Rolf-Christel Guie-Mien and Marco Gebhardt, and new Macedonian forward Sasa Ciric, Magath has the core of a decent side. Even a UEFA Cup place should not be beyond them.

ENERGIE COTTBUS

The Bundesliga debutants from eastern Germany have been widely tipped to go straight down. But, then again, no one expected them to rise this far and in coach Eduard Geyer, the last man in charge of the East German national team, they have an outstanding motivator. The team's biggest problem is their lack of experience. Only skipper Steffen Heidrich and Brazilian attacker Franklin Bittencourt have spent any time in the German top flight.

FREIBURG

The Black Forest club are the neutrals' favourites. They play entertaining, one-touch football and have in their ranks bright young prospects such as midfielder Tobias Willi and attacker Florian Bruns. But their Achilles heel is defence. Watch out for their Eastern European and African axis: Georgian wing-back Levan Kobiashvili, his compatriot up front Alex Iashvili and two Tunisian internationals, playmaker Zoubier Beya and striker Adel Sellimi.

HAMBURG

Could be the team to take advantage should Bayern or Leverkusen slip up. Their three-man defensive unit of Nico-Jan Hoogma, Andrej Panadic and the promising Ingo Hertzsch performed well last season, as did Nico Kovac and Rodolfo Cardoso in midfield, and Mehdi Mahdavikia, Roy Prager and the evergreen Tony Yeboah up front. Now they are even stronger thanks to the signing of attacking midfielder Marcel Ketelaer (Gladbach), forward Marek Heinz (Sigma Olomouc), midfielder Stig Tofting (Duisburg) and wing-back Ronald Maul (Arminia Bielefeld). Hamburg have also managed to keep hold of keeper-cum-penalty-taker Hans-Jorg Butt, though he will leave for Leverkusen at the end of the season.

HANSA ROSTOCK

Hansa have spent the past two seasons battling against relegation and although they do possess some impressive players, namely defender Kai Oswald, midfielders Peter Wibran and Timo Lange, and Swedish attacker Magnus Arvidsson, a general lack of class might prove their undoing. Newcomers such as winger Rene Rydlewicz (Arminia Bielefeld) and Swedish defender Andreas Jakobsson (Helsingborgs) are unlikely to stop the rot.

HERTHA BERLIN

The capital city club are overtly ambitious and general manager Dieter Hoeness never tires of saying that the Bundesliga title is their goal. Yet the Berliners have been peculiarly quiet, confining their recruitment campaign to Leverkusen playmaker Stefan Beinlich and Ulm's Portuguese central defender Rui Marques. A top-six finish is well within the compass of a side blessed with the creativity of Beinlich, Dariusz Wosz and young German international Sebastian Deisler, plus goalscorers of the calibre of Michael Preetz and the Brazilian Alex Alves. Unfortunately, their back-line – apart from Marko Rehmer – is not in the same league.

KAISERSLAUTERN

Fans were sad to see long-serving left-sided midfielder Martin Wagner and Swiss playmaker Ciriaco Sforza leave for Wolfsburg and Bayern Munich respectively. But Otto Rehhagel's men may still end up as one of the surprise packets of the new season. There is more than sufficient talent at the club. Harry Koch, the Slav Slobodan Komljenovic, the Egyptian Hany Ramzy and new Czech signing Petr Gabriel are all top-class defenders; bad boy Mario Basler has shaped up well in midfield, and the little and large partnership up front of Swede Jorgen Pettersson and the Czech Vratislav Lokvenc – bought for £3million from Sparta Prague along with Gabriel – has much potential. The fact that the club's top scorer last season, French international Youri Djorkaeff, appears to be staying can only be a bonus. He had been linked with a move to Bayern Munich.

KOLN

Koln booked a return ticket to the top flight as Second Division champions and with highly-rated coach Ewald Lienen at the helm, should comfortably achieve their goal of a mid-table spot. As a winger with Monchengladbach in the 1970s, Lienen was a long-haired Marxist-Anarchist; now in more conservative mode, he preaches discipline and teamwork. But, above all, he is a master motivator. Many of the side can make a splash in the Bundesliga, namely midfielders Moses Sichone, Dirk Lottner and Christian Springer, and attacker Christian Timm. Chief among their new signings is Czech midfielder Miroslav Baranek (Sparta Prague).

1860 MUNICH

The Lions have proved they are somewhat more than poor relations to city rivals Bayern, twice beating them in the Bundesliga last season and earning a stab at the Champions League after finishing fourth. Nor is there any chance of any 1860 player resting on his laurels because coach Werner Lorant is a hard taskmaster. There were many outstanding performers last term, with the principal boys being Bundesliga top scorer Martin Max, veteran playmaker Thomas Hassler, rookie defender Martin Stranzl and young schemer Thomas Riedl. Now Lorant has even more options. The Czech sweeper Tomas Votava is fit again and the club have bought well this summer, recruiting Under-21 keeper Simon Jentzsch (Karlsruhe), Norwegian midfielder Erik Mykland (Panathinaikos) and front-man Markus Beierle (Duisburg).

SCHALKE

Should be an interesting season. Certain fans were far from impressed that their club had signed Andy Moller from local rivals Dortmund, while speculation continues to grow that Belgian striker Emile Mpenza – who only joined at the turn of the year – is itching to cash in on his showing at Euro 2000 and move on. Certainly coach Huub Stevens is under much pressure. Not only must he improve on last season's 14th-place finish, but supporters are also baying for more attractive football as well. Moller apart, it is hard to see how the new signings, who also include the foul-happy Polish defender Tomasz Hajto (Duisburg) and midfielder Jorg Bohme (Bielefeld) will bring an upturn in fortunes.

Bound for Berlin...Stefan Beinlich is moving to ambitious Hertha

STUTTGART

Stuttgart narrowly missed out on a UEFA Cup place last season, but, in truth, they probably did not deserve one. They had a dreadful home record, rarely functioned as a unit and many of their experienced players, particularly Bulgarian playmaker Krassimir Balakov and former German national team defender Thomas Berthold, just did not produce often enough. The old guard have had their day. Berthold is looking for a new club, Balakov has been stripped of the captaincy and looks likely to feature only intermittently, and Austrian keeper Franz Wohlfahrt has returned to the old country. Instead, coach Ralf Rangnick's line-up will feature new signings midfielder Silvio Meissner (Bielefeld) and forward Jochen Seitz (Unterhaching), plus the youthful talent of keeper Timo Hildebrand and midfielders Bradley Carnell, Krisztian Lisztes and Roberto Pinto.

UNTERHACHING

Last season, newly promoted Unterhaching won many friends with their spirit, attractive football and fair play, and they comfortably survived their inaugural campaign in the top flight. The story should be the same this time round. The only player to fly the nest was attacker Jochen Seitz (Stuttgart) and the squad has been strengthened by midfielder Dietmar Hirsch (Duisburg) and forward David Zdrillic (Ulm).

WERDER BREMEN

The scene looks set for a good season. Werder have wise old heads in defender Andre Wiedener and midfielders Dieter Eilts, Andy Herzog and Marco Bode; a crop of outstanding youngsters – defenders Frank Baumann, Mike Barten and Razundra Tjikuzu, midfielders Christoph Dabrowski and all-rounder Torsten Frings – and have spent wisely in the summer. In come Dutch central defender Frank Verlaat (Ajax), promising Yugoslav international left-back Mladen Krstajic (Partizan Belgrade) and German Under-21 defensive midfielder or centre-back Fabian Ernst, who was surprisingly released by Hamburg.

WOLFSBURG

Despite finishing sixth and seventh in the past two campaigns, the club backed by Volkswagen remains a much under-rated force. A team that can count on players of the class of Nigerian striker Jonathan Akpoborie, German midfielder Zoltan Sebescen, Ghanaian schemer Charles Akonnor and Romanian midfield general Dorinel Munteanu deserves more respect. Now the squad has been reinforced by the arrival of former international left wing-back Martin Wagner (Kaiserslautern) and Austrian international midfielder Dietmar Kuhbauer (Real Sociedad).

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Edwards out, Kenyon in

Gavin Hamilton on a significant change of personnel off the pitch at Manchester United

THE 40-year reign of the Edwards family at Manchester United is over. Peter Kenyon, currently deputy chairman, is to replace Martin Edwards as chairman of the English champions from August 1.

Edwards, who inherited the club on the death of his father Louis in 1980, is now expected to sever all his links with Old Trafford, starting with his stake in the club, now reduced to 6.58 per cent after some recent sales.

In 20 years as chairman, Edwards has presided over the rapid expansion of United as a global merchandising force. When Edwards almost sold United to Michael Knighton in the 1980s, the club was valued at £10million. Now United is worth almost £1billion.

Blue to red...Nick Barmby with Liverpool boss Gerard Houllier

Edwards had been expected to pursue a bid to succeed Sir Roland Smith as chairman of United's plc arm, but his reputation has been so badly damaged by the failed attempt by BSkyB to buy United and by the breakdown in his relationship with manager Alex Ferguson that he will now slip quietly away.

Unlike the messy presidential battles at Real Madrid and Barcelona, there was no blood spilled on Old Trafford's immaculate carpets. United are run as a business these days, not a sporting institution, and the succession was swift, calm and, above all, businesslike.

Kenyon, a former boss of the sportswear firm Umbro, with whom United have a close relationship, had been lined up for some time.

"I've been here for three years so I think I've had a reasonable apprenticeship," he said.

"Obviously it's a big job, it's the biggest club in the world and we've got lots of opportunities ahead of us."

Kenyon is expected to attempt to improve United's poor public relations, and he is known to want manager Alex Ferguson to stay on beyond his stated retirement date of 2002.

But Ferguson insisted he will go, having been refused a role 'upstairs'. "I made it obvious for quite a while that I would like a role in the club," he said. "But I didn't hear anything from them so I started making plans. I've not been short of offers and I've got a lot of plans in various areas. Some are in football, but I am finished with management and coaching, that is without question.

"Martin Edwards felt that I should not have any involvement at all with the club because it is the Sir Matt Busby syndrome. But I can't agree with that."

One outcome of Kenyon's accession to power could be that more money is made available for new players and increased wages.

United's transfer activity has again been limited this summer, with just Fabien Barthez arriving from Monaco to solve their long-running goalkeeping problem.

United's rivals were more indulgent. Chelsea splashed out £15m on Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink from Atletico Madrid, while also bringing in Mario Stanic from Parma and Bolton's Eidur Gudjohnsen.

Liverpool surprised many with a £6m move for Everton's Nick Barmby, who became the first player to make the short journey from the Blue side of Stanley Park to the Red for more than 40 years.

If Barmby's transfer was a surprise, then the man Everton signed as a possible replacement was an even bigger one: Paul Gascoigne. Gazza had been looking for a way out of Middlesbrough, where first-team chances were limited, and manager Bryan Robson was even prepared to pay up the rest of his contract.

Walter Smith, Gascoigne's manager during a successful spell at Rangers, offered Gazza a lifeline with a two-year deal, but insisted that any misbehaviour would be punished.

A more promising signing could turn out to be Cameroon international Alex Nyarko from Lens, one of a growing band of players from the French League who are moving to England. In addition to Barthez, two other Euro 2000 winners headed across the channel: Christian Karembeu to Middlesbrough and Robert Pires to Arsenal.

Pires's arrival was expected to herald the departure of Marc Overmars from Highbury, which has also seen Davor Suker and Nigel Winterburn leave for West Ham. Meanwhile, the Brazilian Edu will not play for Arsenal at all. The club pulled out of a proposed deal when he was turned back by immigration officials at Heathrow airport after presenting forged papers which purported to show he was a Portuguese national.

Wimbledon's relegation has led to the break-up of their squad Keeper Neil Sullivan and defender Ben Thatcher have joined Spurs, where they will play alongside Serhii Rebrov, an £11m signing from Kyiv Dynamo. And young striker Carl Cort has joined Newcastle in a £7m deal.

Taking hold...new Celtic boss Martin O'Neill

O'Neill arrives to mount challenge to Rangers

SCOTLAND

CELTIC'S vast army of supporters, disheartened by the spectacular downturn in their team's fortunes last season, will be hoping that the appointment of Martin O'Neill as manager represents a new dawn for the club.

O'Neill, who has a lifelong affection for Celtic, moved to Parkhead during the close season following a highly productive spell in charge of Leicester City. His task now is clear: to make Celtic capable of mounting a serious challenge to Rangers' supremacy.

O'Neill's first major move in the transfer market was to sign Chelsea striker Chris Sutton for £6million, as a replacement for the Leeds-bound Australian Mark Viduka.

In response to developments at Parkhead, Rangers chairman David Murray was quoted as saying: "If Celtic put down a fiver, I'll put down a tenner."

This message of intent has been backed by a summer signing programme that has seen manager Dick Advocaat strengthen his squad through the acquisition of yet another Dutchman, Bert Konterman, from Feyenoord, and three highly rated Scotsmen – defender Paul Ritchie (Hearts), midfielder Allan Johnston (Sunderland) and forward Kenny Miller (Hibernian).

The forthcoming season will see a notable change to the Scottish Premier League structure, with the top 12 teams splitting into two sub-divisions of six during the closing stages. Hopefully, this will determine the main issues and eliminate the vast numbers of meaningless encounters that were played out towards the end of last season.

Irrespective of the new structure, it is hard to identify any likely candidates equipped to sustain a challenge to either of the Old Firm clubs. Aberdeen have publicised their internal financial troubles, Hearts have been subjected to public squabbling about the use of a major cash injection from a corporate investor last season, while Hibs' lack of ambition was exemplified in the sale of their most valuable asset, Miller, to Rangers.

Alan Fairley

N. IRELAND

Players forced out after wage bill cut

IT SEEMS that even the most successful clubs in the Irish League are strapped for cash. Champions Linfield are rumoured to have lopped £100,000 off next year's budget, and have released half-a-dozen members of their title-winning squad, including influential Scotsman Stuart Callaghan. It is simply too expensive to bring the 23-year-old left-sided midfielder over from Glasgow each week. Manager David Jeffrey has made one signing so far: 27-year-old striker Gavin Arthur, from Glenavon.

Cup holders Glentoran are also looking to cut wage costs next term, as are Cliftonville, who escaped relegation when they won a play-off against First Division runners-up Ards. The latter have had to sell their ground and assets because of huge financial difficulties, and until a new stadium is built they will play in Belfast at Solitude, the home of their play-off opponents.

A lack of resources looks to have played a large part in the decision of Crusaders manager Martin Murray to resign his post after just one season in charge. He has been replaced by former Crusaders full-back Gary McCartney, who was in charge of Linfield's championship winning reserve team last season.

Former Northern Ireland international Mal Donaghy has left Newry Town after just eight months, and is replaced by Alfie Wylie.

After much discussion the League management committee has decided that the championship format of two divisions of 10 clubs each will remain in place at least for the forthcoming season.

InterToto Cup representatives Glenavon fell at the first hurdle, drawing 1-1 at home and losing 3-0 away to Slaven Belupo of Croatia.

Roy Kitson

WALES

Nicholas joins Barry

FORMER WELSH international Peter Nicholas has left his coaching post at Crystal Palace to take the helm at Barry Town. The club are aiming to restore themselves as the League's premier club after losing out in the title race to TNS Llansantffraid.

Nicholas released a number of last year's squad, including Northern Ireland Under-21 keeper Dave Wells, as he began to reshape the side for the new season and UEFA Cup campaign.

Llanelli have taken on former Ebbw Vale and Rhayader Town boss John Lewis, who coached Irish side Bohemians last season. His appointment was something of a surprise. With Llanelli's tradition of youth development and attractive football, his effect on the side will be closely scrutinised.

Cwmbran Town fell at the first hurdle in the InterToto Cup, losing 2-0 to Nistru Otaci of Moldova. TNS began their Champions League campaign with a well-deserved 2-2 home draw against Levardia Maardu of Estonia. However, they lost the return 4-0. Bangor City face Halmstads of Sweden in the UEFA Cup in August.

Inter Cardiff and second level UWIC Cardiff have merged to form a new club. Former Northern Ireland Under-21 cap Jonathan Magee has been appointed manager.

Mel Thomas

Standards on the slide

HOLLAND

Dutch domestic football is in a sorry state, writes Klaas-Jan Droppert

AJAX and Feyenoord in crisis, all but one club eliminated from European competition before New Year, a record 10 coaches sacked, and no-hopers Heerenveen qualifying to compete in the new season's Champions League – last term represented a low point in Dutch domestic football.

And it got worse. With Holland's big three already eliminated from the Cup, there was little expectation of a good quality Final as Roda JC, who finished eighth in the League, met NEC Nijmegen, who narrowly escaped being sucked into the relegation play-offs.

Glory...Peeters and Van der Luer

Nor should there have been, as the two sides served up poor fare. Belgian striker Bob Peeters put Roda ahead with a first-half header, and skipper Eric Van der Luer made sure his side would collect the trophy by converting a last-minute penalty.

Then came the promotion/relegation play-offs, when the usual gap between the First and Second Divisions was not evident. Cambuur Leeuwarden and MVV Maastricht both dropped down a division, to be replaced by Groningen and RBC Roosendaal. The latter, a tiny border town club who finished only sixth in the Second Division, nevertheless did enough to gain promotion to the top flight for the first time in their 88-year history.

At Ajax, whose disastrous season typified the state of the League as a whole, new coach Co Adriaanse has been preparing a clear-out. Frank Verlaat has already gone to Werder Bremen, Jan Van Halst, Dani and Wamberto all look set to leave, while the club have signed Norwegian international full-back Andre Bergdolmo.

The biggest transfers of the summer to date have seen Pierre Van Hooijdonk leave Vitesse for Benfica, while Feyenoord's Bert Konterman has joined Rangers. Feyenoord have signed Vitesse utility player Arco Jochemsen to replace Konterman, while Swedish striker Johan Elmander and Australian internationals Brett Emerton and Steve Laybutt are also coming to Rotterdam.

BELGIUM

La Louviere make long-awaited return

LA LOUVIERE, a town that was in danger of becoming better known as the location of Enzo Scifo's restaurant than for its football club, has seen the the local side regain their place in the First Division after taking the end-of-season play-offs by storm.

Patrick Ghislain's side, who finished third in the Second Division, won their first five play-off games before Ostende prevented them from making it a clean sweep by holding them to a 2-2 draw.

It is more than 20 years since La Louviere were in the top flight, during which time they sank into the Third Division for a spell. They go up with Antwerp, who won the Second Division title by a full 19 points.

Over the summer Ghislain has strengthened his squad by signing RWD Molenbeek pair Yves Burlinckx, a forward, and midfielder Alan Haydock, Ingelmunster midfielder Nico Van der Donck, and defender Rudy Moury (Germinal Beerschot Antwerp). They joined the prolific DR Congo forward Eddy Bembuana-Keve, signed from relegated Lommel.

Club Brugge have also been active on the transfer front. Brazilian striker Duarte completed his move from Anapolina to join two other newcomers, Aalst left-back Peter Van der Heyden and Timmy Simons, the Lommel central defender, but Belgian international full-back Eric Deflandre has left for Lyon.

Genk replaced Icelandic midfielder Thordur Gudjonsson, now at Las Palmas, with Berndt Thijs from Standard Liege.

There will be a new name in the top flight next season. Lokeren have finally succeeded in amalgamating with Third Division Sint Niklaas, and the club will play under the tongue-twisting name of Sporting Lokeren Sint Niklaas Waasland.

Nicholas Harling

● F91 Dudelange won the championship of **LUXEMBOURG** for the first time since 1965, finishing 11 points ahead of Jeunesse d'Esch after the play-offs, *writes Tim Brice*.

Jeunesse gained some consolation by beating Mondercange 4-1 in the Cup Final.

Etzella Ettlebruck were promoted to the top flight as Second Division champions, along with Rodange 91. Aris Bonnevoie and Schiffelange went down.

PORTUGAL

Van Hooijdonk eyes Jardel's crown

JOAO PINTO'S controversial move from Benfica to Sporting Lisbon (see profile, right) was the major talking-point of the close season in Portugal, but there have been a number of other important developments.

Mario Jardel's transfer to Galatasaray from FC Porto means that the League's top scorer spot, which the Brazilian has made his own over the past few seasons, is now up for grabs.

A likely candidate to fill it this time around is Dutch international Pierre Van Hooijdonk, who has joined Benfica from Vitesse Arnhem.

Many observers feel that the signing of the controversial Dutchman will bring as much off-the-field trouble to the club as did Joao Pinto. But Van Hooijdonk is undoubtedly more prolific than the former Benfica forward.

Forward Nuno Gomes has also left Benfica, for Fiorentina.

Sporting, meanwhile, have added another Portuguese international to their ranks by signing midfielder Francisco Da Costa from Monaco. They have also brought in two Republic of Ireland players, Liverpool defender Phil Babb and Tranmere midfielder Alan Mahon.

Argentinian midfielder Aldo Duscher has left for Spanish champions La Coruna, with Jose Vidigal, a member of Portugal's Euro 2000 squad, on his way to Italy and promoted Napoli.

A second forward, Antonio Folha, has left FC Porto, in his case for Standard Liege in Belgium, but the club has signed Leandro Amaral, Portuguesa's Brazilian Under-21 international. Porto have also brought in Slovenian international midfielder Miran Pavlin from Karlsruhe.

Alberto da Silva

REP IRELAND

Eircom Park wrangle still unresolved

BERNARD O'BYRNE, the FAI chief executive, has resisted calls from dissenters within his own association to abandon plans to build Eircom Park on the south side of Dublin. Treasurer Brendan Menton has expressed fears that if plans to build the stadium went over budget, the FAI would be in serious financial difficulties.

Champions Shelbourne are adamant they will not play in next season's League Cup. The Reds were annoyed that their proposal for a 10-club, 44-game championship was rejected at the League's AGM.

On the coaching front, Mike Flanagan was sacked after Waterford's play-off defeat by Kilkenny City and has been replaced by Kilkenny's caretaker manager, Paul Power. Cork City's Colin Murphy has quit after just two months to take up a post at Leicester. He is succeeded by former Everton defender Derek Mountfield.

A 2-1 win over South Africa and draws against the USA (1-1) and Mexico (2-2) saw the Republic finish second to the Americans in the US Cup in June.

Sean Creedon

SWITZERLAND

Budget cuts cause exodus

THE CONTINUING decline in attendances last season had the inevitable knock-on effect of forcing the majority of First Division clubs to drastically prune their projected budgets during the close season.

As a consequence, a clutch of top players have moved abroad to seek more lucrative contracts.

Foremost among them was 23-year-old Grasshopper 'wunderkind' Patrick Muller, who has joined Lyon for £5.4million – a record for a Swiss player.

Grasshopper, who failed to qualify for European competition for only the fifth time in 46 seasons, had slashed their planned budget of £7.5m by 30 per cent.

Pascal Zuberbuhler, the national and Basle goalkeeper who was refused a move to Kaiserslautern last season, has finally struck it rich by joining Bayer Leverkusen on a year's loan. His gross salary is in the region of £1.3m.

Meanwhile, new champions St Gallen were stunned to learn that their defensive fulcrum, international Guisi Mazzarelli, had signed a four-year deal with Bari in Italy. It was also a body blow to Hanspeter Zaugg, who succeeded Roy Hodgson as coach of Grasshopper. Zaugg, the former assistant national coach, had hoped to sign Mazzarelli as a replacement for veteran Swedish defender Mats Gren, who has retired.

Former Swiss international Lucien Favre, who had a successful season as a player with Yverdon last term, has taken over as coach.

In the promotion/relegation play-offs, Aarau, Lugano and Zurich did enough to remain in the First Division, in which they will be joined next season by promoted Sion. Delemont were relegated.

Champions St Gallen, not surprisingly, took the honours at the end-of-season awards ceremony. Marcel Koller was named best coach, while Ghanaian striker Charles Amoah, the League's leading scorer with 25 goals last season, received the best player award.

Ivar von Rulach

Lyon-bound...Grasshopper's Patrick Muller

Pro-file Joao Pinto

Benfica cast-off poised to take revenge

THESE are not easy times to be a Benfica fan. Not only did their club commit the cardinal sin in early June of terminating the contract of immensely popular Portuguese international forward Joao Pinto, but also he will, from next season, be wearing the green-and-white hoops of Lisbon rivals Sporting.

The official Benfica line was that they simply could not afford to pay Joao Pinto's salary – said to be £1.5million a year – for the remaining four seasons of his contract. However, no one was taken in. The real reason was that Benfica's German coach, Jupp Heynckes, had declared him surplus to requirements.

Joao Pinto confirmed bitterly: "I'm now unemployed and I have Heynckes to thank. The Benfica president told me himself that Heynckes did not want me any more. I'm deeply disappointed with Heynckes. During the course of last season we did have some differences, but I never went public with them. When we last spoke, he made no mention of what his problem was with me or what he had planned. He didn't have the courage to tell me to my face."

Benfica supporters reacted by organising a demonstration at the club headquarters, where they demanded Joao Pinto's reinstatement and the dismissal of Heynckes. Even the Portuguese Minister of Sport became involved, calling at the player's home to console him.

But there was to be no back-tracking from the Benfica powers-that-be. Heynckes insisted that Joao Pinto's performances had not been up to scratch last season and club president Vale e Azevedo backed the coach, saying: "The entire board and sports committee thought this course of action was right."

Although Joao Pinto flew off to Euro 2000 with Portugal as an unattached player, someone of his class was never likely to start next season without a job. His fine performances in the Low Countries ensured there were plenty of suitors knocking at his door.

Monaco and Newcastle both made approaches, but Joao Pinto finally pledged his future to Portuguese champions Sporting. "I opted for continuity and familiarity," he explained. "Despite tempting offers from abroad, my gut feeling was to stay in Portugal.

"I can never forget the eight wonderful years I had at Benfica. I wish it hadn't ended like this, but I'm a Sporting player now and will do everything I can to help them win the title again and do well in the Champions League. At Euro 2000, I think I showed Benfica and anyone else who doubted me that I still have a lot to offer."

Nick Bidwell

Fact file

Club Sporting Lisbon
Country Portugal
Born August 19, 1971, in Oporto
Previous clubs Boavista, Atletico Madrid (Spa), Boavista, Benfica
International debut October 1991, v Luxembourg
International caps 62 (19 goals)
Honours Portuguese League 1994 (Benfica); Portuguese Cup 1992 (Boavista); World Youth Championship 1989, 1991

Enter Hodgson as Jensen takes the plaudits

Jim Holden on a tale of two coaches as new season approaches

DENMARK

HERFOLGE'S extraordinary triumph in the Superliga has brought widespread acclaim for their player-coach, John Faxe Jensen. To win the championship at a small, provincial club, in his first season in charge, is a magnificent achievement.

Herfolge, who have none of the resources of the two big-city clubs, Brondby and FC Copenhagen, clinched the title with one game left to play. With closest challengers Brondby losing at AB, a 1-1 draw for the village team at Silkeborg made them certain of the championship.

Jensen's future immediately became the subject of intense speculation, with English club Wimbledon, relegated from the Premiership, suggested as one possible destination. However, the ex-international vowed to stay at Herfolge.

FC Copenhagen's response to their disappointing season, when they finished only eighth in the League to miss out on European competition, was to turn to Roy Hodgson, the former Internazionale and Switzerland coach.

Hodgson, who resigned from Swiss club Grasshopper in May, arrived saying he would give the current set of players a chance to impress him before he dipped into the transfer market. However, he has already admitted that he does not possess the kind of tall, strong striker he has always favoured.

Brondby were made favourites for next season's title, but AB could also be significant challengers. Promoted FC Midtjylland are tipped to be the surprise package.

In another unexpected win for an under-rated club, Viborg lifted the Danish Cup to earn a UEFA Cup place. Hans Eklund scored the only goal in the Final against AaB after eight minutes.

Taking note...Hodgson aims to revive FC Copenhagen

The departure of two of Denmark's brightest young talents has proved the biggest talking point on the transfer dealings front. Peter Lovenkrands left AB for Rangers, and 15-year-old Mads Timm, from OB, has agreed to join Manchester United's youth system. Timm's transfer has caused controversy because of his age.

Morten Olsen, former captain of Denmark's successful 1980s team, has now taken the reins of the national side and revealed that he would be promoting youth to the team. Claus Jensen of Bolton and Dennis Rommedahl (PSV) are obvious potential beneficiaries.

NORWAY

Rosenborg suffer Euro hangover

SEVERAL players who represented Norway at Euro 2000 experienced hangovers when they returned to domestic duty with their clubs.

Rosenborg, in particular, struggled in their first match at home, losing 1-0 to minnows Strindheim in the third round of the Cup. Rosenborg were without John Carew, who joined Valencia after Euro 2000, and they have also lost international defender Andre Bergdolmo to Ajax for £2million.

Carew's replacement, Frode Johnsen, from Odd Grenland, has settled well and scored on his League debut. Meanwhile, Staale Stensaas, returning to Rosenborg in place of Bergdolmo, showed that he has recovered from an injury-blighted season with Rangers by winning the man-of-the-match award in the 2-1 League win against Valerenga.

Championship contenders Molde have strengthened their squad by taking Martin Andresen and Andreas Lund on loan from Wimbledon.

Meanwhile, Brann Bergen might have made the buy of the season when they signed 22-year-old Petter Andreassen from local club Vadmyra for £5,000. He scored seven goals in four friendlies in June and twice on his League debut against Haugesund in July. Brann also secured the services of Tommy Knarvik, who had been at Leeds.

Lillestrom, who have struggled in the League in the first half of the season, now have to do without their experienced captain, Torgeir Bjarmann, who is joining Linz ASK of Austria.

Sigurd Odegaard

SWEDEN

Halmstads give value for money

THE LEAGUE returned to action after the break for Euro 2000 with title challengers AIK going down 3-0 at Norrkoping. AIK have been ravaged by injuries, and rumours have linked their goalkeeper, Mattias Asper, with Zaragoza.

Instead it is Halmstads who have been setting the pace, and after 10 rounds were leading IFK Gothenburg and AIK on goal difference. According to a recent survey, Halmstads boss Tom Prahl has the safest job among Swedish coaches. He has certainly done wonders on a shoestring budget, and led the club to the League title in 1997.

The race to sign Sweden's latest superkid, Johan Elmander (see profile, right), was finally won by Feyenoord, who signed him from Orgryte on a three-year-contract.

Elmander missed Euro 2000 only through injury and is seen by many as Sweden's most talented player since Tomas Brolin.

Champions Helsingborgs sold their star stopper, Andreas Jakobsson, to Hansa Rostock, who have become Germany's 'Swedish' club. He will be replaced by Jozo Matovac, from Denmark's AaB.

Pentti Hietanen

FINLAND

Litmanen vows to fight for place

JARI LITMANEN wants to put his shaky debut season at Barcelona behind him and is looking forward to better things.

The 29-year-old international forward's future was questioned after the departure of coach Louis Van Gaal, his former mentor at Ajax. There were even rumours of a transfer to Olympiakos of Greece.

But Litmanen has insisted that he is not quitting. "Things could have gone better for me, but I intend to fight for my place and prove that I can do the job for Barcelona," he said.

"Last season, several clear-cut chances fell to me, and I failed to take them. I accept that, but I hope to put things right next time around."

The new Finnair stadium has

been opened in Helsinki, with Jokerit beating local rivals HJK 3-0 in the inaugural match.

Champions FC Haka signed former national team defender Jukka Koskinen, who has been playing in South Korea for Cheetahs. His new club have been a bit erratic lately, mainly because of injuries to their Russian forward, Valery Popovitch, but Haka still led the table by two points from Jokerit, though they had played two games more.

Pentti Hietanen

ICELAND

Surprise packets still out in front

AS THE season approaches the halfway mark, the future for newly-promoted Fylkir looks as bright as their orange shirts, with the side leading the Premier Division with 19 points, one clear of defending champions KR, and with a game in hand.

Tipped as potential strugglers before the season began, the team from east Reykjavik have confounded their critics by beating some of the pre-season championship favourites.

Grindavik, another team doing surprisingly well, were lying just three points off the top and seem to have shrugged off their role as perennial relegation candidates.

In the FA (Coca Cola) Cup, the major shock of the early rounds was Fram's 2-1 win at holders KR.

On the European front, Leiftur became the first Icelandic side to reach the second round of the InterToto Cup, overcoming Swiss club Lucerne in a two-leg thriller. Leiftur went through on away goals after drawing 2-2 at home and then 4-4 in Switzerland. However, they suffered a 6-2 aggregate mauling by Sedan of France in the third round.

Eidur Gudjohnsen has crowned a remarkable comeback from injury by becoming the most expensive Icelandic player of all time, following a £4million move from Bolton to Chelsea.

Rab Christie

Clean slate...Litmanen aims to atone for shaky start at Barça

Pro-file Johan Elmander

Swedish wonderkid set to sparkle in Holland

SWEDISH forwards are traditionally a hit at Feyenoord. Ove Kindvall scored their winner in the victory over Celtic in the 1970 European Cup Final, Henrik Larsson piled up the goals for the club in the 1990s, and now the Rotterdammers hope they have another 'Super Swede' in the shape of teenager Johan Elmander, who recently agreed to join them from Gothenburg club Orgryte.

No wonder the Feyenoord management looked so pleased as they announced the five-year deal they had secured with Elmander, who will see out the current Swedish season with Orgryte before moving to Rotterdam in November. After all, for just £2million they had picked up one of the brightest young talents in Europe and one who had been targetted by clubs such as Barcelona and Roma.

There was a time when the Romans thought the starlet was heading their way. However, he decided that playing understudy to Gabriel Batistuta, Vincenzo Montella, Marco Delvecchio and Co was not the right move at such an early stage in his career and plumped for Feyenoord.

Roma coach Fabio Capello was reported to be livid, wondering why Elmander had opted to play in "a **** competition like Holland's". But Elmander's choice of Feyenoord was a logical one. In the Dutch League, he should actually get to play.

"I knew the sort of club and League I wanted to play for after leaving Sweden, and Feyenoord and Holland fits perfectly," said the 19-year-old. "The technical and tactical standards are high and Feyenoord can compete with the best in Europe. It should be great to play at the De Kuip stadium. The club invited me to a Champions League game against Marseille last season and the atmosphere was incredible.

"I can play in two or three different forward positions, but I don't care where Feyenoord play me as long as I'm in the team. But I'm not an out-and-out goalscorer. I've got to improve my finishing."

The Swedish national team could certainly use a player of Elmander's natural flair, judging by their stereotypical attacking play at Euro 2000. But former Sweden captain Nils Liedholm has already warned against expecting too much too soon from the youngster.

"In Holland they are describing Elmander as a cross between Bergkamp and Van Basten, and I'm not sure it's good for someone who hasn't yet played for the senior national team," declared Liedholm. "He needs more calm around to develop in the right way. He has a lot of talent. He's very quick, good in the air, technically outstanding and has the advantage of being able to play in attack or slightly deeper.

"On the other hand, he needs more physical power and endurance. When he puts those things right, he should be a great player."

Nick Bidwell

Fact file

Club Orgryte/Feyenoord (Hol)
Country Sweden
Born May 27, 1981, in Gothenburg

Hakan's price in dispute

Hasan Cemali on the continuing wrangle over the Inter-bound forward

TURKEY

Shirt tales...Hakan Sukur displays his new Inter kit

HAKAN SUKUR might have already been presented to the Italian media holding the shirt of his new club, Internazionale, but at the time of writing agreement had yet to be reached on his transfer fee from Galatasaray.

Gala had initially given Hakan a price-tag of £8.5million when he came on to the market earlier in the summer, but the UEFA Cup-holders upped that figure to £14m when Hakan began negotiations with Inter.

Later, when it became clear that the Italians would not meet this asking price, Gala reduced it to £11.5m.

"It's not fair," Hakan commented as the negotiations continued. "My club is greedy. They should have been honest with me. They should have sat down with me to settle my transfer fee before negotiating with the Brazilian striker Mario Jardel [now arrived at Galatasaray from FC Porto]."

Meanwhile, Hakan's former boss at Gala, Fatih Terim, has definitely moved to Italy, to take the reins at Fiorentina. His replacement is ex-Romania boss Mircea Lucescu, who has agreed a two-year deal. As well as signing Jardel, the former Rapid Bucharest boss was negotiating to buy Alen Boksic of Lazio and Viorel Moldovan from Fenerbahce. Other signings include defender Emre Asyk (Istanbulspor), while forward Arif Erdem has left for Real Sociedad.

New signings for Besiktas, now under Italian Nevio Scala, include defender Dimitri Khlestov (Moscow Spartak), Slovakian utility player Miroslav Karhan (Betis) and forward Pascal Nouma (Lens).

Fenerbahce have also been active in the market. Now with recent national team boss Mustafa Denizli at the helm, they have signed Yugoslavs Zoran Mirkovic (Juventus) and Nikola Lazetic (Obilic Belgrade), Israeli midfielder Haim Revivo (Celta Vigo), Croats Milan Rapajic (Perugia) and Igor Biscan (Dinamo Zagreb), and Swedish striker Kennet Andersson (Bologna). Turkish signings include Ali Gunes from Freiburg and Oktay Derelioglu from Gaziantepspor. On their way out are Elvir Bolic (Rayo Vallecano) and Tayfun Korkut (Real Sociedad).

Following Mustafa Denizli's move to Fenerbahce, Senol Gunes, the ex-Trabzonspor and Turkey keeper, has been appointed the national team's new manager. Ex-Eintracht Frankfurt boss Jorg Berger has signed up with Bursaspor.

YUGOSLAVIA

The best move out

THE country's finest talents continue to leave in numbers and there is no sign that this exodus is likely to be halted in the near future. Mateja Kezman, last season's League top scorer, has left Partizan for PSV Eindhoven, while his team-mate Mladen Krstajic has joined Werder Bremen. Other departures included Obilic playmaker Nikola Lazetic (Fenerbahce) and Red Star defender Ivan Dudic (Benfica), while Red Star captain and libero Goran Bunjevcevic was also poised to go.

As a result, the quality of the domestic League will remain as poor as in recent years, and fans will spend much more time watching foreign football on TV than the game at home.

Vladimir Novak

● Production glitches in our Summer issue caused errors to appear in the news from Yugoslavia. The coach of Red Star is Slavoljub Muslin, and he did not resign at the end of last season. Miodrag Jesic was Partizan's coach, and it was he who resigned. The League was not Red Star's virtually from the start of the season. In fact, they struggled early on and got on top only during the spring campaign.

MACEDONIA

Six face drop next term

IN AN attempt to raise standards, the Macedonian FA has decided to reduce the number of First Division clubs from 14 to 10 at the end of the coming season. Consequently, six teams face relegation this term. Furthermore, there will now be only one Second Division, instead of the previous two.

Pelister Bitola, under new coach Branko Bozic, have enjoyed great success in the InterToto Cup, beating Luxembourg's Hobscheid 4-1 on aggregate and then Sweden's Vastra Frolunda 3-1. In the Champions League qualifiers, Sloga Jugomagnat were set to field new signings Zoran Jovanoski and Arben Nuhiu in the tie against Irish club Shelbourne.

At home, the FA has been called in to resolve the dispute arising from the transfer of three Sloga players to rivals Vardar. The players – Nexmedin Memedi, Arsim Abazi and Zoran Miserdovski – believed that they were free agents, but Sloga insisted they were still under contract.

Vardar have been the most active in pre-season transfer activity. Risto Bozinov, Sasa Ilic, Goce Gruevski, Dragan Veselinovski, Esad Colakovic and Feim Beganovic have all signed for Macedonia's most popular club. Meanwhile, Pobeda have appointed Nikola Ilievski as coach.

Major exports involve Georgi Hristov moving to NEC Nijmegen of Holland, and Sasa Ciric to Eintracht Frankfurt.

Michel Stojmanovski

ALBANIA

Tirana take record title after close finish

TIRANA took the League title for the 19th time (an Albanian record) in El Sayed Metwally's first season in charge. However, the triumph was hard-won.

At the end of the campaign Tirana and challengers Tomori both had 52 points, forcing a play-off to determine the outright champions. Even this finished in a 1-1 draw, with Tirana finally securing the League crown by winning the penalty shoot-out 5-4.

Goalkeeper Blendi Nallbani and Hungarian midfielder Zoltan Kenesey were the season's top players for Tirana, while Tomori won many friends by playing adventurous, attacking football. Unfortunately for them, it did not bring any honours.

Former champions Partizani and Elbasani were relegated, with Beselidhja Lezhe and Besa Kavaje going up.

Gezim Nushi

MALTA

National team go down in style

THE MATCH against England in early June, held as part of the FA's centenary celebrations, was the biggest fixture of the season, and the Maltese put on one of the best displays in their history before narrowly going down 2-1.

Only Richard Wright's last-minute penalty save from David Carabott denied the home side a shock draw.

The national team had also been unlucky a week earlier, when it took a 90th-minute goal by South Africa to win the friendly.

On the domestic front, Sliema Wanderers beat new champions Birkirkara 4-1 in the Cup Final, and repeated the feat with a 3-0 win to lift the Super Cup.

In the transfer market, Valletta have bought David Carabott from Hibernian and Karl Bonnici from Sliema. Birkirkara, meanwhile, have signed Muammar Saadi Gaddafi, the son of Libyan leader Colonel Gaddafi, and Romania's Adrian Popescu.

Domenico Aquilina

GREECE

Clubs spend freely in search of success

ANGELOS FILIPPIDIS, the new president of Panathinaikos, has shown his willingness to spend big money by buying Portuguese international Paulo Sousa, on loan at Parma last season, for around £4million.

Also joining the club is Croatian striker Goran Vlaovic, who cost £3m from Valencia, while last season's top scorer, Nikos Limberopoulos, has signed a new three-year contract.

Grigoris Georgatos has returned to his beloved Olympiakos after a year away at Internazionale. He is joined by Uruguayan international forward Gabriel Alvez (Nacional Montevideo), the top scorer in Uruguay last season with 33 goals, and Brazilian international midfielder Ze Elias, also from Inter.

Meanwhile, Valencia have continued to show interest in Slovenia's Euro 2000 star Zlatko Zahovic, who Olympiakos value at £4.5m.

In other major moves, AEK Athens grabbed Greek international Vassilis Tsartas from Sevilla for a club record £4m, and Iraklis also broke their club record, spending £4m on Brazilian striker Ederson Fofonka from Defensor Sporting of Uruguay.

AEK will have a distinctly Argentinian flavour this season, having also signed striker Fernando Rodolfo Davas and midfielder Emmanuel Diego Salvador Ruiz for a total of £1.6m, plus two Boca Juniors players, Miliano Re and Luis Dario Calvo, on loan for two seasons.

Lou Economopoulos

Just landed...Paulo Sousa arrives in Greece with his wife

Pro-file Mario Jardel

Prolific Brazilian aiming for the top in Turkey

BRAZILIAN goal machine Mario Jardel is an expert at throwing defenders off the scent and creating the necessary time and space to convert half-chances. And he showed similar characteristics when recently concluding a surprise £11million move from FC Porto to Galatasaray.

After racking up 129 League goals for Porto over the past four seasons, the Brazilian was hot property indeed and had a bevy of top European clubs dying to exploit his redoubtable aerial power and assured right-footed finishing.

But, ultimately, it was Galatasaray who made all the right negotiating moves, persuading Jardel to sign a four-year contract and to step into the boots of Inter-bound Hakan Sukur.

No doubt a salary package said to be worth more than £1.4m a year proved a great incentive for Jardel to trade Portugal for Turkey. Yet considerations of playing style must have swayed his decision too. Like Hakan, Jardel's principal strength is his heading ability, and at Gala he would be guaranteed the same abundant supply of accurate crosses that he feasted on at Porto.

"Portuguese football and FC Porto in particular have been so good for my career," said Jardel. "In Portugal I had a lot of success, made my reputation and developed my self-confidence. But four years is enough and the routine can affect your motivation. I needed a new environment and a new set of goals, and I see Galatasaray as a good move for me.

"I'm not frightened of being compared with Hakan Sukur. He was great for Galatasaray and I hope to be great for this club too.

"I haven't joined an average club. They are the UEFA Cup holders, they are very ambitious and the plan here is to have success soon in the Champions League. I want to be at the centre of all that."

Such is the intense competition for places in the Brazilian national team attack that the prolific Jardel has made only sporadic appearances for the *Selecao*. But he hopes that his move to Turkey could speed up the fulfilment of his aspiration to get a sustained run in the team.

"Up until now I've had few opportunities to show my real worth for Brazil," says Jardel. "If I score goals in the Champions League and Galatasaray are successful in this competition, my luck with the national team could change for the better."

Nick Bidwell

Fact file

Club Galatasaray (Tur)
Country Brazil
Born September 18, 1973, in Fortaleza
Previous clubs Fortaleza de Ceara, Vasco da Gama, Gremio, FC Porto (Por)
International debut August 1996, v Russia
International caps 5 (0 goals)
Honours Rio state championship 1993, 1994 (Vasco da Gama); Rio Grande do Sul state championship 1996 (Gremio); Libertadores Cup 1995 (Gremio); Portuguese League 1997, 1998, 1999; Portuguese Cup 1998, 2000

Romantsev woos Robson

Heard the one about the Brazilian who's thinking of playing for Russia? Victor Gusev reports

RUSSIA

MOSCOW SPARTAK forward Robson Luis Perreira da Silva may become the first Brazilian to play for Russia after being asked by national coach Oleg Romantsev whether he would like to become a Russian citizen.

Brazilian law allows dual citizenship and Robson, who is under contract with Spartak until 2001, said he would consider the proposal.

Romantsev, who is also senior coach at Spartak, is a firm fan of the Brazilian, saying: "Robson jumps higher and runs faster than any other player in my team."

'Maximka', as Robson is nicknamed by the fans, is in his third full season at the club and has managed to win over a previously sceptical Russian media, who initially regarded him as a "beach footballer".

He has scored a number of important goals, including a hat-trick against Moscow Torpedo that made him a hero with Spartak supporters and potential Russian national team candidate.

The only other non-Russians to play for the national team have been a group of Ukrainians, including the present captain, Victor Onopko, who made their decision after the break-up of the Soviet Union. However, local soccer authorities are optimistic that Robson will be ready to play for Russia in the World Cup qualifying campaign.

In the League, Spartak held a commanding eight-point lead after 17 games, while at the bottom, several clubs have already lost patience with their coaches. Uralan Elista have had four since the start of the season, the latest being Yugoslav Boris Buniac. Alexander Averyanov, sacked by Uralan in May, has replaced Vladimir Gutsayev at Alaniya Vladikavkaz.

Lokomotiv Nizhny Novgorod, still without a win, sacked both Valery Ovchinnikov and Nikolai Kozina within a month, while Rotor Volgograd's Georgy Yartsev was replaced by former Russian Olympic coach Yevgeny Kucherevsky after a string of poor results. CSKA boss Oleg Dolmatov has also parted company with his club.

Wanted man...Robson has wowed Spartak fans

UKRAINE

Dynamo: Why we let Rebrov go

THE SEASON'S end and the imminent departure of forward Serhii Rebrov for Tottenham prompted Kyiv Dynamo owner, Grygoriy Surkis, to make a statement about the club's transfer policy.

"Last year the transfer of our best forward, Andrii Shevchenko, to AC Milan, was not easily accepted by either shareholders or fans. Many wanted him to stay," he said. "The players of Dynamo are not slaves. They have contracts. We can talk about extending these. But to achieve this there has to be agreement on three sides: coach, club and player.

"This year the same situation occurred with Serhii Rebrov. We could persuade him to stay for a further six months. But I doubt whether his levels of motivation would be maintained."

Surkis also pointed out Dynamo's current inability to buy stars from Western Europe, and the need to focus their purchasing potential on countries that had similar levels of economic development to Ukraine.

The Dynamo summer sale also included goalkeeper Illya Bliznuk, defender Volodymir Ezersk and midfielder Sergiy Kormiltsev. It looks as though talented midfield general Igor Kostuk will return to Vorskla Poltava, while Surkis has indicated that he is willing to discuss a transfer of influential midfielder Andrii Husin.

After all this outward activity, Dynamo are in reconstruction mode. Midfielder Svetoslav Petrov has been taken on-loan from Bulgarian side CSKA Sofia, while another recent addition is Hungarian defender Laszlo Bodnar, who cost £350,000 from Debrecen.

Shakhtar Donetsk have signed Romanian striker Marian Savu from National Bucharest and promising midfielder Vyacheslav Shevchuk from Metalurh Zaporizhzhya.

Karpaty Lviv have added former Dynamo midfielder Bogdan Yesyp to their squad, but the club's build-up to the new season has been overshadowed by the murder of their former president, Roman Girnyk, near his house.

Oleg Zadernovsky

POLAND

Polonia back on top after 54 years

POLONIA WARSAW are League champions for the first time since 1946 – and they did it in style, with a nine-point margin over defending champions Wisla Krakow.

Polonia, who played in the lower divisions for more than 40 years before returning to the Premier League in the 1990s, have made excellent progress under manager Dariusz Wdowczyk, a former Legia Warsaw, Celtic and Reading player.

It was a disappointing season for Legia, who finished fourth and missed out on European competition.

Pogon Szczecin, supported by Turkish firm The Reform Company, have appointed former national coach Janusz Wojcik as their new manager in a bid to challenge for a European place.

However, two of Poland's more successful clubs of recent years – LKS Lodz and Lech Poznan – have shown how transient life at the top can be. Both were relegated, despite the fact that LKS won the title in 1998 and Lech came third only a year ago. Their downfall stems from being forced to sell their best players because of financial difficulties.

The relegation system will be changed next season. The bottom two teams will go down automatically, but the third from bottom face a play-off with the third-placed side in the Second Division.

GKS Katowice and Slask Wroclaw replace LKS and Lech in the top flight, while Amica Wronki go into the UEFA Cup again after lifting the Cup for the third season running. They beat Wisla 5-2 on aggregate in the two-leg Final.

Dariusz Kurowski

GEORGIA

Torpedo end Dinamo's stranglehold

TORPEDO KUTAISI became the first club to break Dinamo Tbilisi's 10-year monopoly of the Georgian championship when they took the title by five points.

Torpedo, under former Dinamo coach David Kipiani, also reached the Cup Final, but were denied the Double by Lokomotiv Tbilisi, who beat them 4-2 on penalties after a 0-0 draw.

Dinamo not only lost their perfect run of League titles since Georgia became an independent state in 1990, but by the end of the season they were also enveloped in a financial crisis. Players had not been paid for six months and the club were reportedly £500,000 in debt.

The federation then announced it was freezing Dinamo's assets because the club had owed money to Third Division Mretebi Tbilisi for four years.

The former champions at least have a new coach, with former international Revaz Arveladze succeeding Otar Korgalidze.

The fact that all Georgia's best players are now based abroad was reflected in the naming of Freiburg's Levan Kobiashvili as the country's Player of the Year.

Vladimir Kalinkovich

ROUND-UP

Dubovsky dies in waterfall leap

PETER DUBOVSKY, the **SLOVAKIA** midfielder, has died while on holiday in Thailand. The 28-year-old, who played in Spain for Oviedo and was capped 33 times by his country, received fatal injuries when jumping from a 30ft-high rock at a waterfall.

HUNGARY: Dunaferr forward Attila Tokoli was named Players' Player of the Year and club-mate Miklos Salamon, a defender, voted FA Player of the Year in the end-of-season polls. Sandor Egervari, who won the title with MTK in 1998-99 and repeated the feat with Dunaferr last season, was named top coach.

ROMANIA: Ceahlaul coach Viorel Hizo quit days after the club overcame Estonian side Trans Narva 9-4 on aggregate in the first round of the InterToto Cup. Hizo said he took the decision because of interference from the club's owner in team tactics.

AUSTRIA: Swedish coach Hans Backe has agreed a three-year deal with Salzburg. Backe, previously with AaB in Denmark, replaces Croat Miroslav Polak.

Farewell, Kyiv...Rebrov has joined exodus to Western Europe

Pro-file Cristian Chivu

Romanian revelation who tamed Beckham and Figo

ROMANIA went into Euro 2000 with more than their fair share of thirty-somethings in the squad, leaving many observers to wonder what the future would hold when the likes of Hagi, Popescu and Petrescu bid their international farewells. But if brilliant left-back Cristian Chivu is anything to go by, the well of talent in the country is far from dry.

It says everything for Chivu's temperament and ability that not once at Euro 2000 did his performances give an inkling that he was a teenager with just a handful of full caps to his name.

Many a seasoned veteran would be excused for dreading direct confrontation with wide-men of the calibre of Luis Figo and David Beckham. Yet whether it was down to the innocence of youth or amazing maturity, the unflappable Chivu just took it all in his stride and neutralised both. Figo swapped flanks at half-time to get away from him, while Beckham had his quietest game of the tournament when faced by the Ajax youngster.

But Chivu's talent does not just lie in defending. He was also excellent in supporting the attack, taking every opportunity to raid down his flank and link intelligently with midfield creators Hagi and Dorinel Munteanu. He even chose the big stage to score his first international goal, against England.

For many he was the revelation of the finals, but Chivu has no intention of getting carried away on a wave of hype. "I thought I had a good tournament on the whole, but I'm only 19 and it would be stupid to believe everything is going to be easy for me from now on," he says. "I'm honoured that I was selected for the European Championship and that some people were impressed by me. But I have to keep on learning and working. Hopefully, I've a long career ahead and I'm only at the beginning.

"I didn't have the time to be nervous about playing at Euro 2000. Everything happened so quickly. I hadn't expected to start any of our games; I thought I had been included in the squad for the experience. But the senior players helped me settle, gave me lots of good advice, on and off the pitch, and with each game I became more and more confident."

Chivu has just completed his first season at Ajax following a move from Universitatea Craiova, and former Romania coach Mircea Lucescu believes a spell in the Dutch capital is just what the doctor ordered for the starlet. Lucescu says: "He can only benefit at a club like Ajax, who believe in developing youngsters and playing constructive football.

"Chivu did very well at Euro 2000. He's a wonderful prospect – quick, versatile, full of fight and energy. But there's still a lot of work to do with him."

Nick Bidwell

Fact file

Club Ajax (Hol)
Country Romania
Born October 15, 1980, in Resita
Previous clubs Resita, Universitatea Craiova
International debut August 1999, v Cyprus
International caps 8 (1 goal)

The Cup of many colours...

BRAZIL

Brian Homewood on a new farce as the 'Club of 13' takes control

IF PROOF were needed that Brazil's 2006 World Cup bid was in the wrong hands, it came in the very same week that the national federation pulled out of the race, when the CBF announced that it was relinquishing responsibility for the organisation of its own national championship.

The federation has handed the job over to the 'Club of 13' (a group representing, as the name does not suggest, 20 of Brazil's biggest teams), which quickly came up with an abomination called The Joao Havelange Cup. Dubbed the Frankenstein Cup by the media, it will run from August to the end of December and will feature no fewer than 106 clubs.

Even Brazilian football supporters, who thought they had seen everything in terms of ridiculous formats for tournaments, were stunned by this one.

The teams are divided into three groups: the blue, effectively the First Division, features 24 of Brazil's biggest clubs; the yellow, effectively the Second, features 34 more; and the green, the Third Division, has 48 minnows.

The 24 teams in the blue group play each other once and the top 12 go into the last 16. They are joined by three teams from the yellow group (where the 34 clubs are divided into two groups and the top eight teams in each then go into a knockout contest to determine who finishes first, second and third). The final team in the last 16 will be the winners of the green group (divided into lots of little groups, followed by fewer little groups and then a Final).

Straight-faced...Eurico Miranda of the Club of 13

Traditional clubs Bahia and Fluminense, who would have played in the Second Division if the Brazilian championship had gone ahead, were included in the blue group, although many felt they would have been better off in the yellow. After all, in the blue group the chances of qualifying are mathematically 50 per cent but you are up against the best teams in the country. In the yellow, the mathematical chance drops to 9 per cent but you face much weaker opposition.

"They've bred a monster, it's shocking," said Fernando Calazans, one of Brazil's leading soccer writers. "It seems like something from the dictatorship," he added, referring to the days when the military tried to divert attention from real issues by keeping people occupied with football and stuffing the national championship with up to 96 teams.

One team not included in any group – blue, yellow or green – was Gama, from Brasilia. In fact, they are the whole reason this monstrosity

COPA BRASIL

Big spenders Cruzeiro wrap it up

BELO HORIZONTE club Cruzeiro won the Copa Brasil for the third time, beating Sao Paulo in the Final. Cruzeiro scored twice in the last 10 minutes of the home second leg to win 2-1 on the day and by the same aggregate score.

Fabio Junior, who has returned to the club after an unhappy spell with Roma, equalised from a chance set up by veteran Muller before Geovanne scored the last-minute winner from a free-kick which slipped through the Sao Paulo wall.

Minutes before the game, which wrapped up the first half of the Brazilian season, Cruzeiro president Zeze Perella announced that he was unceremoniously ditching coach Marco Aurelio, in favour of Luiz Felipe Scolari. However, a spokesman for 'Big Phil' said Perella had "jumped the gun".

Cruzeiro had spent a lot of money on the team, signing striker Oseas and defender Cleber from Palmeiras, Argentine full-back Juan Pablo Sorin and Colombian Alex Viveros.

Sao Paulo, winners of the Paulista championship only two weeks earlier, have probably been Brazil's best team so far this year. Under Levir Culpi, who joined from Cruzeiro at the end of last year, they have played some attractive football with veteran midfielder Rai in fine fettle.

Strikers Marcelinho and Franca, who scored for Brazil against

Let's party...Cruzeiro celebrate their Copa Brasil triumph

has been created. Last year, the small, unfashionable club were relegated in quite absurd circumstances from the First Division of the national championship. They finished outside the danger zone but were then pushed into it when Botafogo and Internacional, two large, powerful clubs, were awarded extra points from their matches against Sao Paulo, who were alleged to have fielded Sandro Hiroshi when he was ineligible.

The curious thing was that Hiroshi played over a dozen games for Sao Paulo in the tournament, yet Botafogo and Internacional were the only two of their opponents to be awarded points.

Had the rule been applied consistently, Sao Paulo, themselves a big club, would also have been relegated. Outraged by this, a group of Gama supporters won a court order ruling that they be restored to the First Division and Botafogo relegated in their place.

Worried by this precedent, Brazil's leading clubs, with the connivance of the CBF, simply abolished the national championship and set up their own new tournament – without Gama.

Unrepentant and unmoved by a wave of criticism, Eurico Miranda, one of the Club of 13's most prominent members, came out with this gem. "Football is the best organised activity in Brazil," he claimed. And he kept a straight face while he said it.

England at Wembley in May, have been two of the revelations of the year, along with Flamengo's Athirson (see profile, right), while goalkeeper Rogerio Ceni is a regular scorer from free-kicks.

Palmeiras and Corinthians both concentrated on the Libertadores Cup, the former beating the latter in the semi-finals only to lose on penalties to Boca Juniors in the Final. Both were busy dismantling their teams at the time of writing.

The coaches had already gone. Big Phil was still studying his options, and there were plenty of them, while Oswaldo de Oliveira, hounded out of Corinthians by the fans after failing to add to the Brazilian championship and World Club Championship titles he won before and after the New Year, had joined Vasco da Gama.

Brian Homewood

Pro-file Athirson

Another Brazilian magician in the making

BRAZIL and Flamengo newcomer Athirson practises conjuring in his spare time. On the field his magic lies in his powerful surges from left-back and in his magnificent shooting on the run.

Since the sacking of Romario last year, Athirson has inherited his position as idol of the Flamengo club, but the two are very different characters. "I go to sleep early and don't go out much at night," says Athirson.

"Zico is my football hero. I've taken every opportunity to talk to him and follow his advice. Like he was, I'm a completely dedicated professional."

Yet the 23-year-old had a scrape with the authorities earlier in the summer when he was suspended as the results of a dope test were investigated. The incident ended happily for Athirson, when he was cleared of taking illegal substances, though his suspension had ruled him out of the national squad for two World Cup qualifiers.

Long before turning pro, Athirson was already at Flamengo. He started playing indoor football for the club at the age of 11, worked his way up the ranks and made his full debut in 1996.

In the following year he went to the World Youth Cup in Malaysia. Great things were expected of him but injury and the ever-turbulent environment of Brazil's biggest club interrupted his progress. Fortunately, a loan spell with Santos in 1998 helped to get his career back on track.

Since then Athirson has gone from strength to strength. He is sure to figure in the Olympic team as Brazil strive for the gold medal that always has eluded them. The qualifying tournament, restricted to players under 23, was held at the start of the year, and though Athirson began the campaign on the bench, he soon became undisputed first choice.

So impressive were his performances that he was catapulted back into the senior squad, with whom he had seen brief action in last year's Confederations Cup. He is now first in line to take over from Roberto Carlos.

At club level, a move abroad looms, with Juventus the front-runners in the race to secure his signature. "I can't deny that I want to play in Europe," says Athirson.

But for all his ability, a move to an Italian club with its disciplined defence could bring transition troubles. Full-backs in Brazil are primarily attackers, and Athirson more than most. Flamengo normally field a defensive midfielder to cover his frequent advances. The defensive side of Athirson's game is poor: he is often caught off balance and is prone to selling himself with reckless tackles.

A solution could be to play him on the left side of midfield. "One day I'll play there," he says, "though it would mean that I'd be receiving the ball with my back to goal, which makes things easier for my marker.

"At left-back I have the whole pitch in front of me when I bring the ball forward, and I can see the options and choose the best move."

Athirson is aware that the opportunities of the future come together with problems, and he will rely on hard work and natural talent to conjure up his own solutions.

Tim Vickery

Fact file

Full name Athirson Mazolli de Oliveira
Club Flamengo
Country Brazil
Previous clubs Flamengo, Santos (loan)
Born January 16, 1977
International debut July 1999, v New Zealand
International caps 3
Honours Mercosur Cup 1999; Rio state championship 1999

River cruise to title

Eric Weil on the finale to the closing championship

ARGENTINA

Target man...Juan Angel's goals helped take River Plate to the title

RIVER PLATE clinched the closing championship with one game to go to add to their success in the opening tournament. It is their 29th title since the start of professional soccer in Argentina, putting them well ahead of Boca Juniors on 18.

With three League games to play in eight days, coach Americo Gallego decided to base his players at the stadium complex. The move paid off, as River beat Chacarita Juniors 5-0, Racing Club 2-0 and Ferro Carril Oeste 3-0 to secure the title.

Gallego's team appeared to be cruising for most of the championship, having topped the table while only intermittently playing well. Their forward trio of Pablo Aimar, Javier Saviola and leading scorer Juan Angel again made the major difference, though other teams contributed to River's success.

Potential title contenders Boca Juniors tended to rest players for domestic games as they concentrated on their successful Libertadores Cup campaign. They also had three points deducted after their game against Newell's Old Boys was suspended when hooligans threw noise bombs on to the field.

San Lorenzo, who finished second, were hampered by having to return on-loan striker Ariel Lopez to Mallorca before the end of the campaign. Then their Colombian international defender, Freddy Grisales, refused to return from his trip to Bogota for the World Cup qualifier against Argentina, claiming the club owed him money.

Independiente had looked liked serious challengers after taking 22 points out of 24 during one eight-game run. But by the end they had lost more than half their team after a string of untimely transfers and loan periods to other clubs.

Racing Club, officially bankrupt and with debts of £40million, staged an auction of 14 players in order to raise money to help pay off creditors. Curiously, no bidders turned up and the players were all given free transfers.

ROUND-UP

Nacional triumph then stars move on

NACIONAL strolled to the opening championship in **URUGUAY**, finishing well clear of joint second-placed Danubio and Penarol.

Since the end of the tournament, six deals involving Uruguayan internationals and masterminded by super-agent Francisco Casal, have gone through. The players, who moved for a total value of £19m, were forward Diego Alonso, from Gimnasia y Esgrima de La Plata to Valencia, keeper Fabian Carini (Danubio to Lazio), midfielder Gianni Guigou (Nacional to Roma), winger Gabriel Alvez (Nacional to Olympiakos), and defender Alejandro Lembo (Nacional to Parma). Casal himself bought Penarol striker Antonio Pacheco, who is expected to move on to Napoli. Alvez has been replaced by Argentine Pablo Islas from Montevideo's Racing Club.

PERU: Champions Universitario won the opening championship with two games in hand and ended with a seven-point lead over Sport Boys. Universitario clinched the title with a 2-1 win at Cerro de Pasco-based Union Minas, who play in the world's highest stadium at 4,380m above sea level. The spectacular winner came from Argentine striker Alberto Carranza after a 70-metre run. The effort caused him to collapse and he had to be revived with oxygen.

PARAGUAY: Olimpia finished the opening championship with a six-point lead over Guarani and Sol de America, despite picking up only one point from their last three games.

BOLIVIA: Jorge Wilstermann took the opening championship with a match to go and eventually finished with a six-point lead over Guabira. It was the fourth Bolivian title for Argentinian coach Jorge Habegger, who enjoyed his three other successes as boss of Bolivar.

CHILE: Defending champions Universidad de Chile beat Universidad Catolica 2-1 to draw level at the top with their Santiago rivals after 10 games.

COLOMBIA: The two Cali teams took the top places in the opening championship with Deportivo finishing two points ahead of America.

ECUADOR: Barcelona, the country's biggest club, beat leaders Aucas 3-2 on the final day of the opening championship to ensure they did not finish bottom. The result allowed Olmedo to take the title.

Eric Weil

Hero to zero...MetroStars quickly lost interest after Matthaus showed indifferent form

Major Lousy Signing

Lothar Matthaus' time at MetroStars has been a big embarrassment for all concerned, writes Paul Gardner

USA

WELL, it figures. MetroStars, the worst team in MLS, sign up Lothar Matthaus, one of the game's greatest players. So MetroStars rocket to the top of the League.

From worst to first in no time at all. Except that the reborn MetroStars owe none of their new-found success to Matthaus. In fact, the signing of the German has proved to be an enormous embarrassment for the club, for Major League Soccer and for American soccer in general.

The move always had a surreal air about it. Why would MLS want to sign a player who could play only a handful of games with MetroStars before returning to Europe for Euro 2000? And if he was playing well, why would Bayern Munich agree to let him go halfway through their season?

Matthaus arrived, played nine undistinguished games for MetroStars, then returned to Europe to lead Germany to disaster in Euro 2000. He could have returned promptly to New York, but a week – and two games – elapsed before Matthaus was again seen in a MetroStars shirt. His reappearance lasted 60 virtually anonymous minutes. Then he was substituted, and the press box announcer revealed that "Matthaus strained his back attempting a bicycle kick, and re-aggravated his right hamstring".

The press's attempts to find Matthaus after the game failed as he had already left the stadium ...and the country, returning to Germany for treatment to his back. A week later the German newspaper *Bild* featured a front-page picture of Matthaus lounging on the beach at St Tropez with his girlfriend.

Faced with this awkward situation, MetroStars chief Nick Sakiewicz commented: "I'm not sure where he is, and I'm not that concerned. I'm not particularly impressed with the way he is playing."

Which made it official. The MetroStars had lost patience with, and interest in, Matthaus. They were getting along very nicely without him. A meeting was called to discuss the German's future at the club, which suddenly looked a lot less rosy than when he arrived four months earlier.

While the MetroStars were soaring to the top of MLS's Eastern Division, DC United were crashing in the opposite direction.

DC, the closest thing that MLS has to a dynasty, have played in all four of the League's finals, winning three. But this season has been an unmitigated disaster, with the club on the verge of failing to qualify for the play-offs.

Coach Thomas Rongen has been saying regularly that "this club has too many good players not to bounce back". But his mantra was wearing thin after DC had played 22 games and won only four of them. He has subsequently acquired the nickname Thomas Wrongagain.

Certainly, nothing seemed to go right for Wrongagain. Defender Jeff Agoos and forward Ben Olsen – both US national team players – were sidelined by injuries; Bolivian playmaker Marco Etcheverry threatened to quit the League because of poor refereeing; and Rongen was involved in a televised sideline spat with midfielder Richie Williams.

While the on-field performances have been disorganised, DC may be about to get their off-the-field act together. The club have been up for sale for over a year, and a buyer has at last been found: EM Warburg Pincus, a New York-based private equity and venture capital firm. The deal will also include Tampa Bay Mutiny, who have until now been a League-owned and operated club. Financial details have not been released but DC are estimated to be worth £16million. Tampa, a much less successful club who have had trouble drawing fans, would be valued at considerably less.

However, the deal has been complicated by Ken Horowitz, the owner of Miami Fusion. He has insisted that no MLS franchise be sold for less than the £13m he paid for the Miami franchise in 1997.

MEXICO

Toluca entertain all the way

TOLUCA cruised to the Summer Championship, taking their fifth League title by playing entertaining football and scoring a total of 65 goals – 44 in the 17-game League and 21 in the six play-off matches. Leading strikers Jose Cardozo and Jose Maria Morales scored eight each in the latter stage.

Toluca simply swept away Santos Laguna in the two-leg Final, winning 7-1 on aggregate.

The federation voted in a new president, replacing Enrique Borja with Alberto De La Torre from Atlas. His first act was to oversee the restoration of the 20-team format to the top division, which will be instituted from 2002.

The annual Acapulco carnival, a tax-free, week-long vacation for the club owners, known as 'The Draft', saw over 100 players change clubs. Financially-troubled Guadalajara sold internationals Paulo Cesar Chavez to Monterrey and Claudio Suarez to Tigres UNL, while promoted Irapuato bought an amazing 20 players.

Carlos Ramirez

Goal poacher...Jose Cardozo

Overcome...players and officials suffer from the effects of police teargas

Thirteen die as teargas attack sparks stadium stampede

Over-zealous police played a large part in Harare tragedy, says Mark Gleeson

WORLD CUP QUALIFIERS

THE second round of World Cup qualifying group games was overshadowed by the death of 13 spectators at the National Sports stadium in Harare at the end of Zimbabwe's tie against South Africa. The fatalities occurred when fans were crushed in a stampede caused by the firing of teargas by over-zealous police as they attempted to stamp out crowd disturbances.

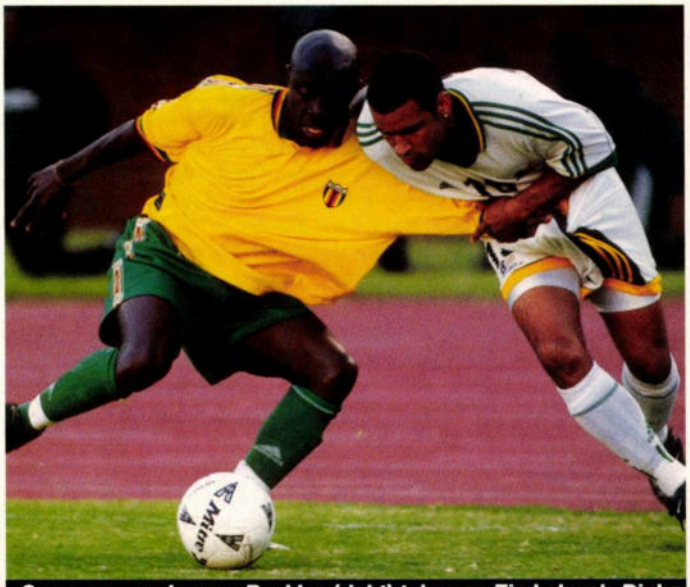
The trouble started eight minutes from the end of the Group E game, when Delron Buckley scored his second goal to put South Africa 2-0 ahead.

The provocative celebrations of the visitors, added to the pent-up frustration of the home fans, who had high hopes of a win, led to a hail of missiles, directed both at the South African players as well as the Zimbabwean bench.

The disturbance lasted for only a minute, with the assortment of bottles and other objects falling on to the athletics track surrounding the pitch and way short of causing any injuries to the players. However, police fired teargas into the crowd, engulfing the spectators and causing the abandonment of the game, which had resumed during the brief missile-throwing period.

The players were forced to lie face down on the pitch to avoid being overcome by the teargas. South African midfielder Eric Tinkler said: "Our eyes were burning and we were choking for breath. The police just over-reacted – it was crazy."

FIFA have since banned any more internationals at the stadium, but there is little indication that action will be taken against the police. The match result is still to be verified by FIFA but South Africa are likely to be given all three points. Such an outcome would reduce even further Zimbabwe's chances of claiming the single qualifying place from the group.



Game on...goalscorer Buckley (right) takes on Zimbabwe's Dinha

The game was one of 10 qualifiers staged over the same weekend, with the next set of fixtures, the third round, scheduled for January. It is still early in what promises to be a riveting campaign, but the likes of Cameroon and Guinea are already staking their claims for places in Japan and Korea.

Guinea, under new coach Bernard Simandi, lead Group E with six points, after beating Burkina Faso 3-2 in Ouagadougou. Teenagers Souleymane Youla and Pascal Feindouno were among the scorers.

Cameroon also have six points and top Group A after their 3-0 home triumph over Angola in Yaounde. Patrick Abanda opened the scoring after 20 minutes and Bernard Tchoutang made sure of the points by grabbing the other two goals midway through the second period.

Zambia, under Dutch coach Jan Brouwer for the first time, beat Togo 2-0 in Lusaka. Harry Milanzi and Chaswe Nsofwa were the scorers.

Four of the five teams in Group B have three points after Liberia upset Nigeria 2-1 and Ghana opened their campaign with a 5-0 thrashing of Sierra Leone.

Former Arsenal striker Christopher Wreh emerged as the hero in Monrovia, scoring either side of Nwankwo Kanu's goal for Nigeria.

In the other tie, which had been switched to Accra from Freetown because of the security situation in Sierra Leone, Ghana took a first-half lead through Charles Amoah. In the second period they went on the rampage following the dismissal of Sierra Leone's Mohamed Mansaray. Amoah added a second, with Charles Akonnor, substitutes Yaw Preko and Ishmael Addo completing the rout.

In Group C Morocco came from behind to beat Algeria 2-1 in Fez. The result put them top of the table after Egypt and Senegal drew 0-0 in Dakar.

Abdeljilil Hadda scored twice for the Moroccans after Ali Mecabih had given Algeria a 36th-minute lead.

Ten-man Tunisia took the lead in Group D with a laboured 1-0 win over Madagascar in Tunis, the goal coming on the stroke of half-time from Zoubier Beya after midfielder Hassan Gabsi had been sent off.

Goals by Jason Mayele and Ngidi Yemweni gave the Democratic Republic of Congo a 2-0 win over Congo in Kinshasa.

AFRICAN NATIONS CUP QUALIFIERS

Sweet revenge for Namibia

LESOTHO caused the only upset of the African Nations Cup preliminary round qualifiers, by beating Mozambique on penalties. But it was Namibia who grabbed the glory at the end of a goalfest in their tie with Benin.

The Namibians had warned that they were out for retribution after the first leg in Cotonou, where allegedly they had been housed in a motel swarming with mosquitoes and ladies of the night, and subjected to a barrage of poor treatment by their Beninoise hosts.

They also had to drive to the match venue in three taxis after the bus supposedly to be provided by their hosts failed to arrive.

Not surprisingly, Namibia lost 2-0 but they turned it all around a fortnight later, hammering seven goals in the first half and one in the second to win 8-4 on aggregate. Silvester Goraseb scored a hat-trick, with Razundura Tjikuzu getting a brace.

It was Ivory Coast, however, who recorded the biggest aggregate victory of the round, beating Niger 7-0, with three of their six goals in the second leg coming from Bulgaria-based Serge Alain Yoffou.

Zimbabwe scored five against the Seychelles in Bulawayo, with Luke Petros, restored to the starting line-up, scoring twice. George Weah also grabbed two goals as Liberia overcame the Cape Verde Islands 3-0.

Uganda were the only side to win away, beating Malawi 2-1 in Blantyre for a 5-2 aggregate triumph.

Mauritius, playing behind closed doors because of security concerns, almost blew it against Tanzania. The visitors scored two quick goals in the second leg to take a 2-1 aggregate lead, and it was only in the last 15 minutes that Mauritius found their feet, scoring three times to go through 4-2.

The preliminary round winners now go into the group phase of the qualifiers, along with seven countries who were given byes – Algeria, Egypt, Ghana, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa and Tunisia – plus Morocco, who were given a walkover when Guinea-Bissau withdrew.

Mark Gleeson

ROUND-UP

Turks raid Tunisia

Turkey-bound...Khaled Badra

TURKISH clubs have been on a spending spree in **TUNISIA**, Denizlispor snapping up Esperance's international defender Khaled Badra, and Bursaspor signing Riadh Bouazizi, from Etoile Sahel. Bouazizi's former club have signed Brazilian duo Gilmar Oliviera and Delima Rogerio, while Esperance have bought another Brazilian, Renaldo, and appointed Anton Piechniczek as their new coach.

Elsewhere in **NORTH AFRICA**, Al Ahly have won a seventh straight **EGYPTIAN** championship with two matches to spare. Zamalek and Ismailia were contesting second place.

The League has cut the number of foreigners to two per club and banned foreign keepers altogether.

CENTRAL AFRICA

DC Motema Pembe, runaway winners of the first stage of the Kinshasa League in **DR CONGO**, are re-signing midfielder Emeka Mamale, who has had spells in Belgium, South Africa, South Korea and Tunisia.

GABON'S national team have refused to play any more games at their national stadium in Libreville after crowd abuse following two defeats by Congo in recent friendlies.

Provincial club Fovu Baham needed just four points from three matches to win the League title in **CAMEROON**.

EAST AFRICA

Sierra Leone-born coach Abo Koroma has taken over at **KENYAN** Premier League side Kimbo after losing his job earlier this year with Kampala City Council of Uganda. Kimbo are bottom of the A section, in which Mumias Sugar lead from Tusker. In the B section, KCB and Nzoia Sugar share the lead.

AS Marsouin of **MAURITIUS** have lost international midfielder Jean-Sebastien Bax to Santos of South Africa, and Peddy Andichy to Le Havre.

In **TANZANIA**, three sacked senior FA officials, including chairman Muhidin Ndolanga, have appeared in court charged with stealing £34,000 from the organisation.

St George have retained the title in **ETHIOPIA** after drawing 1-1 in their last League game against Awassa City.

SOUTHERN AFRICA

SWAZILAND fired coach Francis Banda in the wake of the 2-0 defeat by South Africa in the Cosafa Castle Cup. The new coach is former international Dumisa Mahlahela. Banda will remain in Swaziland as coach of club side Green Mambas.

In **ZIMBABWE**, former international full-back Carlos Max has resigned as coach of relegation-threatened Arcadia United. Former Zambian national coach Samuel Ndlovu has rejoined Mufulira Wanderers.

In **BOTSWANA**, Moikalafi Jobe and Temba Raitau of club side Botswana Meat Commission died after a collision with a truck as they returned home from a game. It is the second tragedy to strike BMC, after Zimbabwe-born striker Collen Zulu died in a car accident earlier this year.

In **ANGOLA**, Petro Atletico led the Girabola by 12 points from second-placed Inter Luanda.

Former **MOZAMBIQUE** captain Chiquinho Conde has left relegated Vitoria Setubal in Portugal to join Al Shabab of Saudi Arabia.

Siyabonga Nomvete of Kaizer Chiefs has won both Footballer of the Year and Players' Player of the Year awards in **SOUTH AFRICA**. National team keeper Andre Arendse has signed for Santos of Cape Town after three seasons in England, where he played for Fulham and Oxford United.

Blue Waters have opened up a six-point lead in the Premier League in **NAMIBIA**.

WEST AFRICA

Sporting Bissau have won a third successive championship in **GUINEA-BISSAU** by beating arch-rivals Benfica on the last day of the season.

ASEC Abidjan of **IVORY COAST** are beginning to sell off the cream of their youth academy, starting with Aruna Dindane, who has signed a four-year contract with Anderlecht.

The **NIGERIAN** championship is being decided in a mini-league involving the top four clubs – Lobi Stars, Katsina United, Plateau United and Julius Berger.

David Adiele, coach of CAF Cup quarter-finalists Iwuanyanwu Nationale, has quit because he was not offered a new contract.

Centre Salif Keita, the academy set up in Bamako by the former African Footballer of the Year, led the championship in **MALI** at the halfway stage. The new national coach is Italian Romano Matte.

GHANA'S Under-17 team, twice winners of the World Championship, were surprisingly eliminated in the first round of the qualifiers for 2001, losing 2-1 to Gambia.

BENIN captain Mouchadirou Amadou has been banned from international action for six months after his sending off – during a World Cup qualifier in April – provoked violent scenes in Cotonou.

Mark Gleeson

No one to play...Saudi champions Al Ittihad

Exit Al Ansar

Weakened Lebanese pull out of Asian Club Championship rather than take a hammering

THE news of Lebanese club Al Ansar's withdrawal from this year's Asian Club Championship came as little surprise, given the timing of the games and the fact that they are not the first team to consider such a move. The Beirut club made the decision after it was revealed that none of their Lebanese internationals would be available to contest the opening fixture, against Saudi Arabia's Al Ittihad.

The scheduling problem has come about due to this year's Asian Cup and, to a lesser extent, the Sydney Olympics, which come within a month of each other. Clubs already face a backlog of games as a result of both tournaments.

Many leagues have been suspended until the Asian Cup is over, at the end of October – a situation that has caused friction between clubs and national teams. Several associations were planning to hold training camps during the late summer months at the time many of the top players are due to represent their clubs in the Asian Club Championship and Asian Cup-winners Cup.

Al Ansar decided to pull out, believing it was not right to subject the club's young players to a potentially humiliating exit at the hands of the Saudi champions. "Our coach believes it would not help our young players to face up to such a strong side," said director Ezzat Kraytem. "It might harm them and we don't want that just because all our experienced players will be out."

The withdrawal of Al Ansar came after news that another Middle Eastern club, United Arab Emirates' champions Al Ain, are also thinking about pulling out in the wake of the Asian federation's scheduling of their first-round clash for mid-August.

Here, the problem is not caused by a clash with preparations for the Asian Cup (the UAE, surprisingly, failed to qualify) but by the climatic conditions. The summer desert heat makes it virtually impossible to perform at anything like maximum capacity.

Michael Church

JAPAN

Grampus Eight sack 'disrespectful' trio

NAGOYA GRAMPUS EIGHT, who finished fifth from bottom of the J.League's First Stage, finally lost patience with their under-performing national team stars and sacked three core players, two games into the Second Stage. World Cup midfielder Takashi Hirano and team-mates Shigeyoshi Mochizuki and Go Oiwa, who both played for Japan in the Kirin Cup in June, were told in no uncertain terms that their club didn't want them any more.

Grampus manager Joao Carlos dropped Hirano and Mochizuki from the squad after the team lost their opening Second Stage match 3-0 to Kashima Antlers. He then substituted Oiwa during the 5-1 defeat by Jubilo Iwata in the following game. Oiwa had been stranded on the touchline taking a drink as Antlers scored their first goal.

Joao Carlos, who had complained about the trio's bad attitude all season, initially offered his own resignation after the Jubilo fiasco but vowed to carry on when the club agreed to fire Hirano, Mochizuki and Oiwa. He said: "We've run out of solutions. They have no modesty and no respect for team-mates, team staff, club officials or fans."

Both sides in the dispute have had similar confrontations in the past. Joao Carlos resigned as manager of Kashima Antlers after a run-in with Brazilian World Cup star Jorginho, while the Grampus Three were all in conflict with Joao Carlos' predecessor at the club, Koji Tanaka.

The sacking of Mochizuki, in particular, has a bearing on the national team, since he has a key role in coach Philippe Troussier's plans for the Asian Cup and possibly as one of the over-age players at the Sydney Olympics as well.

Grampus won the Emperor's Cup in January and were widely fancied to challenge for their first League title this year. However, their poor results have sent them to third from bottom of the overall table.

The club will also lose their most famous foreign star, Dragan Stojkovic, at the end of the season when he is due to take over as national coach of Yugoslavia.

One former J.League star about to make a comeback is David Bisconti, who was signed by fellow Argentine Nestor Piccoli for Avispa Fukuoka. Bisconti scored 53 goals in 121 J.League appearances between 1993 and 1996.

Gamba Osaka, who have also made a promising signing in Croatia striker Nino Bule from Zagreb, won their first three Second Stage games. They led the table, along with Antlers, with FC Tokyo a point behind.

Mike Plastow & Yumiko Nagae

Kicked out...Hirano was fired by Grampus Eight

ROUND-UP

Jorge accepts Saudi challenge

PORTUGUESE coach Artur Jorge has surprised **SAUDI ARABIAN** football by agreeing to take over as head coach of Riyadh's Al Nassr. Jorge, 54, has signed up for two seasons after the sacking of Yugoslav Milan Zivadinovic, who led the side to the World Club Championship in Brazil earlier this year.

The former Porto and Swiss national coach has no experience of Arab football and takes the reins of a team that finished last season empty-handed.

Belgian coach Robert Waseige has rejected an offer to coach Jeddah club Al Ahli, who have instead engaged 57-year-old Argentine Angel Lopez.

Holders Singapore avoided regional powerhouses Thailand and Indonesia in the draw for November's **TIGER CUP** tournament – the South-East Asia Championship. They face Cambodia, Vietnam, Laos and Malaysia in Group B, while Indonesia and hosts Thailand face Brunei, Myanmar and Philippines in Group A.

INDONESIAN international Kurniawan Dwi Yulianto has been cleared to play despite facing allegations of drug abuse. The former Sampdoria and Lucerne striker, along with two other players – Kuncoro and Mursyid Effendi – were cleared after tests in Jakarta proved they were not suffering from drug addiction.

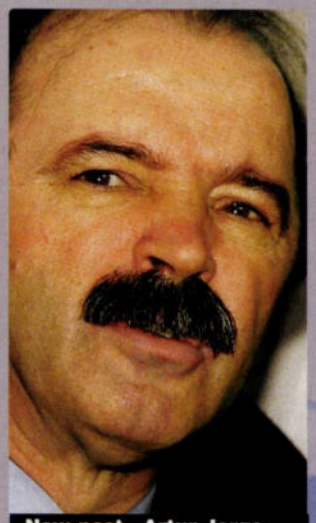
The trio escaped censure despite a confession by Kuncoro that he had taken drugs in a room shared with Kurniawan before a match in April. Kurniawan denied the allegations. The Indonesian federation has ruled that the players should undergo tests every time they play.

UZBEKISTAN have appointed Yuri Sarkisyan as head coach of the national team. He follows Russian Pavel Sadyrin, who stood down after just three months.

Al Salmiya became **KUWAITI** champions with a 2-0 win over outgoing title-holders Al Qadisiya. Fawaz Al Mitri and Bashar Abdullah scored the goals.

Al Rayyan and **QATAR** international striker Mohamed Salem Al-Enazi has become his country's first player to join a European club by signing for newly-promoted Turkish side Yuzgitspor for £320,000.

The **CHINESE** FA has banned three players for life following an attack on a referee that left him in hospital. The official, Yang Li, was seriously injured after being attacked by Zhao Long, Li Xiadong and Zhang Xuqing from the Hebei Yishan club.



New post...Artur Jorge

Paul Mony Samuel will stand down as general secretary of the **MALAYSIAN** FA to take up a post with FIFA and will be replaced by Dell Akhbar Khan. In the League, Penang went two points clear of Selangor after beating Pahang 1-0.

Al Shabab, of the **UNITED ARAB EMIRATES**, have appointed Dane Jorgen Larsson as head coach following the dismissal of Austrian Joseph Hicksberger. League runners-up Al Nasr have appointed Brazilian Sebastian Lapola as head coach.

East Bengal gained some compensation for losing out in the **INDIAN** championship race by beating National League winners and arch-rivals Mohun Bagan 1-0 to win the sixth McDowell Cup tournament. Anith Ghosh scored the only goal in the 49th minute.

THAILAND have hired Czech coach Otakar Doless, initially on a one-year contract, to lead the Olympic team.

Michael Church, Mohamed Chbaro & Azam Mahmood

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ACROSS

1 ------ Alioum, Samsunspor keeper in Cameroon's African Nations Cup side (6)
3 Turkey forward who starred in Galatasaray's UEFA Cup-winning team (4)
7 Dutch city which hosted a Euro 2000 semi-final (9)
9 Veteran German midfielder freed by Bari to join Hamburg in 1998 (4)
10 South African international at Leeds (6)
12 Croatia forward in Lazio's championship-winning squad (6)
13 Ex-Rayo Vallecano and La Coruna defender of Zaragoza and Spain (4)
16 Nation beaten by Brazil in last year's Under-17 World Championship Final (9)
17 Republic of Ireland's Turner Cross stadium club – champions in 1993 (4)
18 Romanian goalkeeper in Spain with Salamanca (6)

DOWN

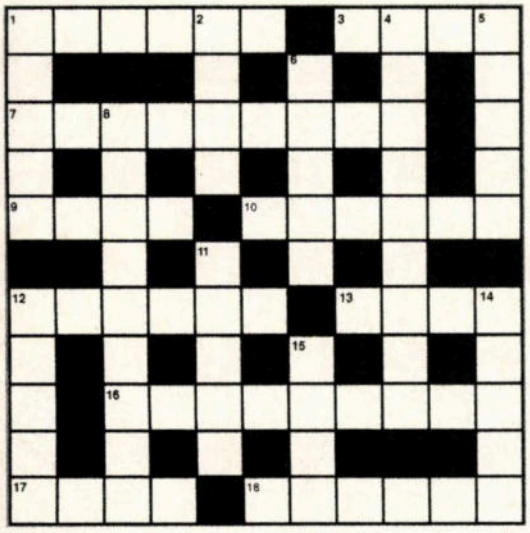
1 Former Werder Bremen player off-loaded this year by Wolfsburg to Hansa Rostock (5)
2 Ghana forward with Sporting Lisbon (4)
4 Danish attacker currently at PSV (9)
5 Italian international playmaker who was with Udinese last season (5)
6 Swedish full-back whose first season at Torino ended in relegation (5)
8 Manchester United's Norwegian striker, once of Molde (9)
11 Norway midfielder instrumental in Monaco's latest title triumph (5)
12 Lemerre's stalwart sweeper, most recently with Inter (5)
14 Al Hilal's Egypt defender who tried his luck with Hansa Rostock (5)
15 Gent and Norway forward formerly at Anderlecht (4)

SUMMER SOLUTION

ACROSS: 2 Spalletti, 6 Thome, 7 Asper, 9 Nyarko, 10 Mass, 12 Owen, 14 Martyn, 17 Iwata, 18 Balbo, 19 Christian.
DOWN: 1 Antonioli, 2 Sloga, 3 Anelka, 4 Leal, 5 Tapia, 8 Rosenborg, 11 Fabbri, 13 Evair, 15 Talan, 16 Haas.

SUMMER WINNERS

1st prize: Carol Cassar, Malta.
5 runners-up: Bami Akande, Stockholm; Eban Hutton, Jamaica; Charles Dayfoot, Ontario; Mark Cleaver, Derby; Remzi Muedin, New York.



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WS WORLD SOCCER OCEANIA

Depleted Socceroos still too good for holders

Paul Moon reports on a cup cruise for Australia

NATIONS CUP

AUSTRALIA comfortably won the Oceania Nations Cup, despite being without three leading players in Mark Bosnich, Mark Viduka and Harry Kewell.

They beat holders New Zealand 2-0 in the Final to book a place in next year's Confederations Cup.

After opening the tournament, held in Papeete, Tahiti, with a record-breaking 17-0 annihilation of Cook Islands, the Socceroos defeated Solomon Islands 6-0 to top their preliminary group.

They then overcame gallant Vanuatu 1-0 in the last four to set up a decider against the Kiwis, 2-0 victors over Solomon Islands in the other semi.

New Zealand were always on the back foot in the Final, but held out until the 40th minute when Sheffield United's Sean Murphy forcefully nodded in a corner from Stan Lazaridis of Birmingham City.

England-based players were also responsible for the second goal. Danny Tiatto, of Manchester City, surged down the left in the 66th minute and, from the byline, scooped a cross into the path of the unmarked Craig Foster for the Crystal Palace striker to easily head home.

Solomon Islands beat Vanuatu 2-1 in the play-off for third place.

NEW ZEALAND

THE biggest surprise so far this season has been the dire form of last year's national champions, Central United. They lay bottom of the League, one point behind fellow Aucklanders Metro, who moved above them soon after appointing Scotsman Sean Hird as coach to replace the departed Kevin Hagan, a former New Zealand international.

University-Mount Wellington continued to lead the National League, with a two-point advantage and a game in hand over second-placed Napier City Rovers.

● FIJIAN champions Ba moved ahead of arch rivals Nadi in the National League to lead the Jetsetters by a single point.

Paul Moon

Cup heroes...Craig Foster and Stan Lazaridis of Australia

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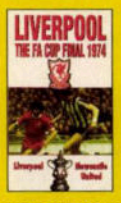

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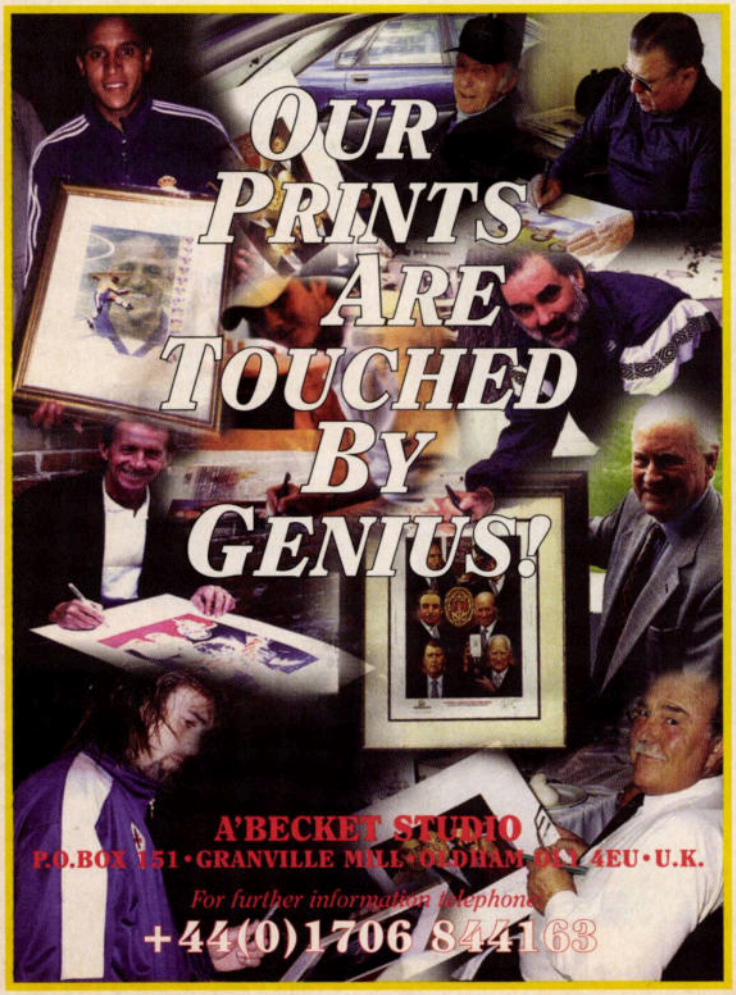

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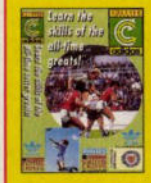

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Brian Glanville's LAST WORD

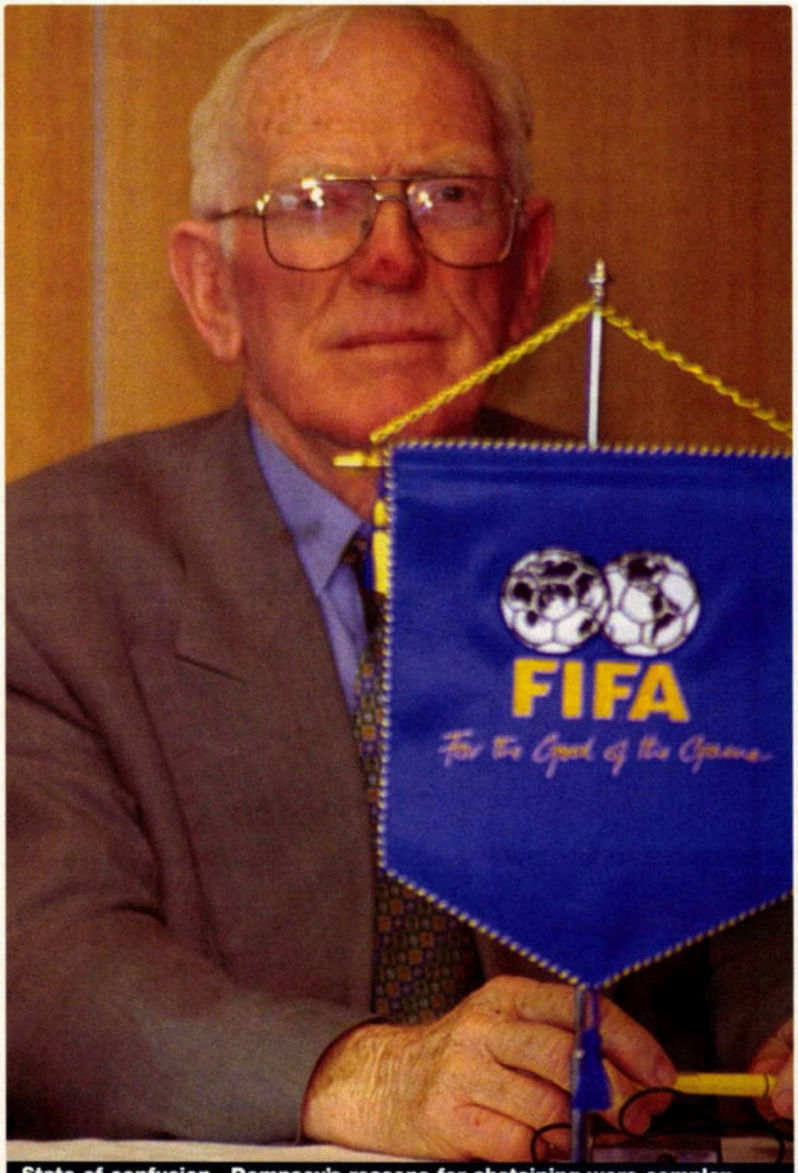
Dempsey saved us from South Africa

'The idea of a country of 60,000 murders a year and rising putting on a World Cup freezes the blood'

CHARLES DEMPSEY has been excoriated rather than venerated, but for my money he emerged from the 2006 World Cup voting as hero and saviour. In brief, a saviour from South Africa.

The motives for his crucial abstention, his defiance of the Oceanics and of his own misguided New Zealand sporting establishment may have been somewhat complex, but they clearly had nothing to do with any kind of bribery.

The idea of South Africa – a country of 60,000 murders a year and rising, and whose confused government may by 2006 have let the economy slip into freefall – putting on a World Cup freezes the blood.



State of confusion...Dempsey's reasons for abstaining were complex

Oh, good old Sepp Blatter may have wanted it, no doubt for his own promotional purposes (it seems, hallelujah, that the Africans may undermine him now), but what of that? The only positive thing one has ever been able to say about Blatter is that at least he is not Joao Havelange.

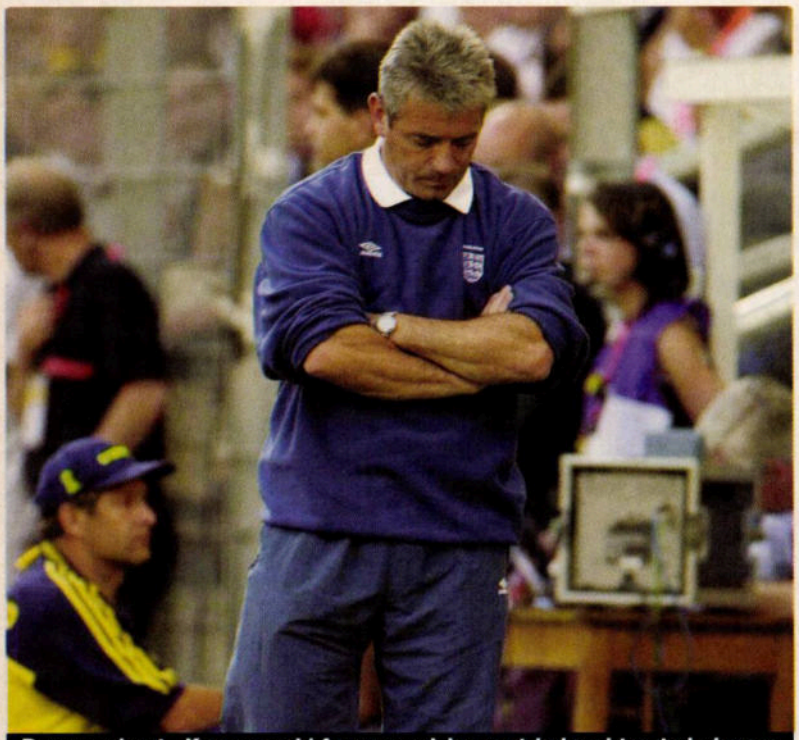
Had England got the tournament, they would surely have made an excellent job of it, and though their bid was a cackhanded, ludicrously extravagant, grovelling round-the-globe affair, it was thoroughly valid. But failing England, there's no doubt that Germany was the proper, even the ideal, solution.

Did England break a so-called gentleman's agreement with the Germans? Having spoken to many people involved in one way or another, I am still not sure. But the triumphant cry of one Germany official that his country's success, with its European support, "proved" the agreement had existed was mindless nonsense. All it might possibly have proved was that some European associations may have believed such a pact was made. It is not much good asking dear old Sir Bert 'The Inert' Millichip whether he made it – I don't suppose he even remembers.

That may have been one strike against England's bid. Another, quite certainly, was the shabby ineptitude with which the FA under Graham Kelly 'The Jelly' and the ineffable chairman, Keith Wiseman, switched horses in midstream to back Blatter in the FIFA presidential election of 1998 rather than Lennart Johansson. Then there was the shocking attempt to suborn the Welsh, again by those two, to vote against our ally David Will, of all people, to put the Southampton coroner Wiseman on the FIFA executive committee. David still stayed loyal to England.

Surely another contribution to defeat was the assignment of failed Sports Minister Tony Banks to our World Cup bid by the increasingly fallible Tony Blair.

Would you buy a used World Cup from this man, with his charmless aggression, his ignorance of the game and its issues, his vulgar abuse of FIFA and UEFA on the very eve of the voting process? I have little time for either body, but there was surely a time and a place.



Down and out...Keegan paid for over-relying on tried and trusted players

Keegan's lack of courage did the damage

AT THE time of writing, it looks as if England are stuck with Kevin Keegan for the immediate future.

The new Saatchi & Saatchi chief executive of the FA, Adam Crozier, quickly called Keegan "an excellent manager" right after England's elimination from Euro 2000, but how would he know? It distresses me to see otherwise sound journalists now interviewing and respectfully quoting Crozier and his cliches as though anything he says about football, rather than its promotion and administration, has the faintest validity.

The idea that England could not have done any better in Euro 2000 because the players simply aren't there was ridiculous. I was not even wholly persuaded that Keegan's tactics were to blame: 4-4-2 is a valid enough system – as the flexible French method proved – if you choose your personnel sensibly. Which means you don't go dicing with death and picking the Neville brothers.

The real case for using a 3-5-2 system was that the players to implement it probably did exist.

Keegan showed no courage. He stuck to the Neville brothers; he stuck to Sol Campbell, who had been out of form all year; he didn't dare to use the promising left-sider Gareth Barry; and he made foolishly little use of Nick Barmby, who had electrified the England attack when he came on late at Wembley against Ukraine in May. He also left Rio Ferdinand and Kieron Dyer at home when either might have given his team fresh life and drive.

While other far more successful managers – Humberto Coelho, and above all Dino Zoff, fell on their sword, Keegan elected to go on. For how long, and to do how much more harm?

Zoff should have stayed

WHAT, in all logic, made Dino Zoff resign as Italy coach after he had been ignorantly and fatuously criticised by the entrepreneur Silvio Berlusconi for not man-marking Zinedine Zidane in the Euro 2000 Final? There had been no need to; and had Italy not played, for so long, a day after France in the semi-finals, their defenders would surely not have tired as they did.

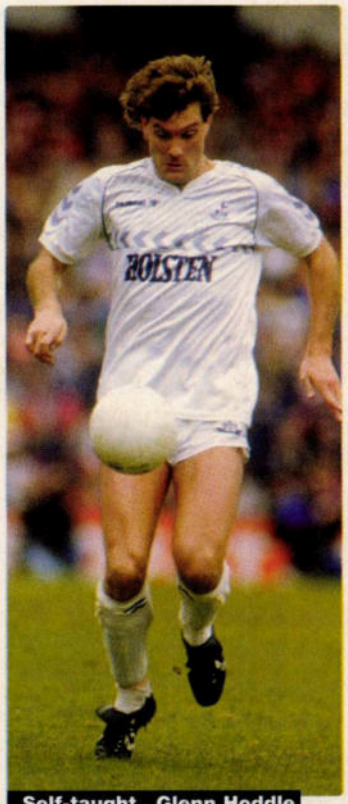
Zoff should have treated Berlusconi's strictures as beneath contempt, and carried on.

Ball players must have their chance

OUT OF EVIL cometh good…for Peter Taylor, the new manager of Leicester. It was an arrogant and ultimately self-destructive act of Howard Wilkinson to sack Taylor as coach of the England Under-21 team and to take them over himself, so ineptly.

This error was thrown into relief at Craven Cottage in February when, so significantly, Wilkinson began the game against what was virtually a teenaged Argentina by leaving Joe Cole on the bench; the very player a large crowd had so obviously come to see. And how they cheered when he at last got on, after half time!

The reason Wilkinson subsequently gave boggled the mind. He wanted, he said, to put out his experienced players (against teenagers?) at the start. Yet he deployed a Manchester United reserve, Luke Chadwick, who seldom gets a sniff of the first team.



Self-taught...Glenn Hoddle

We seem to be going into the usual penitential state of despair about our players' lack of technique and FA chief executive Adam Crozier is talking about "coaching the coaches". What we know all too well, especially after the appalling years of Long Ball Charlie Hughes at Lancaster Gate, is that coaching can do as much or more harm than good. It is worth remembering what Glenn Hoddle once told me – that by the age of 11 he had mastered every trick but one in his dazzling repertoire by practising in his back garden with a tennis ball.

For the umpteenth time may I remind you that there has almost always been a prejudice in English football against ball players. This was seldom so starkly thrown into relief as when Ron Greenwood, a progenitor of the West Ham academy of arts and sciences, dropped Hoddle after a brilliant Wembley debut against Bulgaria with the words "disappointment is part of football".

In 1990 Bobby Robson put Gazza under almost intolerable pressure before the Wembley game against the Czechs with the Italy World Cup in view; Stanley Matthews was left out of the England team time and again; Len Shackleton, Clown Prince of Soccer and technically supreme, hardly got a look-in. And already you hear voices criticising Cole.

It is time, too, that people realised that soccer goes in cycles. Again one has to recall that after Hungary had thrashed England 6-3 at Wembley in November 1953 a book came out called *Learn to Play The Hungarian Way*. But who would want to now?

From the archives...

August 1984

"NO ONE could match his class and certainly no one came anywhere near rivalling his achievements." Sixteen years ago this was *World Soccer*'s verdict on Michel Platini, a recent Serie A winner with Juventus and now victorious captain of France in the European Championship.

Yet while Platini, *World Soccer*'s cover star for the month, was acknowledged as the "outstanding individual" of the tournament, it was stressed that the success of *Les Bleus* resulted from a strong tactical set-up as much as the performances of Platini alone.

France coach Michel Hidalgo had switched between 4-4-2 and 3-5-2 during the tournament as circumstances required. With midfield talents such as Hidalgo had at his disposal, the latter system appeared a 'natural'. But imitators had to understand the need for at least one defender of class to run the show when the midfield net had been pierced.

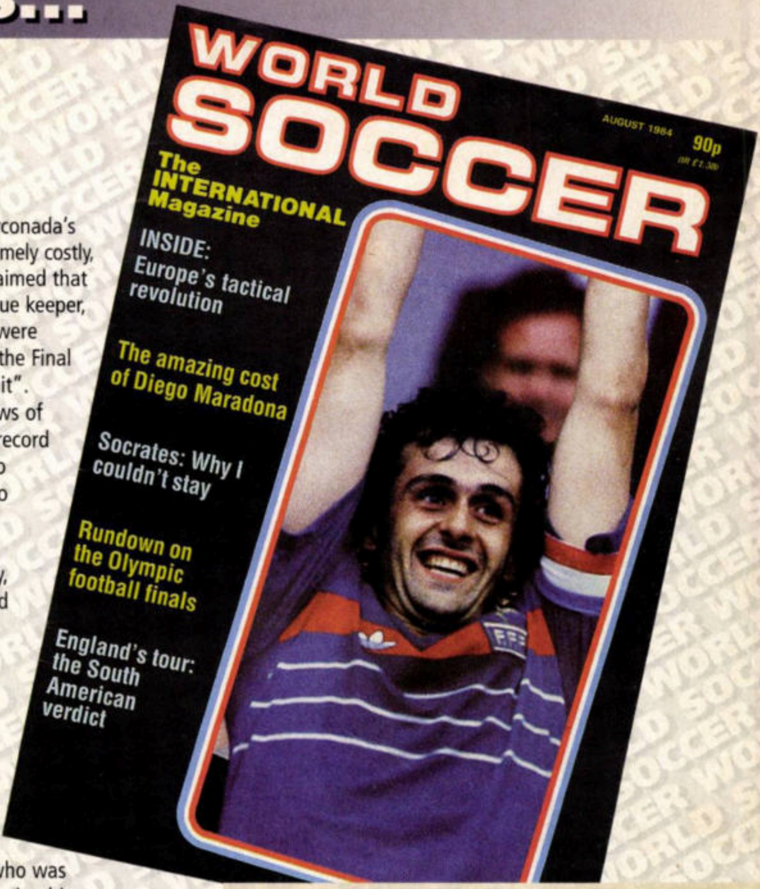
In France's case, this was Maxime Bossis, whose conversion from left-back to sweeper to stopper by his club side, Nantes, had been so successful that Hidalgo had merely had to follow suit to reap the rewards.

The success of *Les Bleus* in 1984 was far from the only similarity to the recent European Championship. Just as this year, the coaches of Germany (Jupp Derwall), Yugoslavia (Todor Veselinovic) and Portugal (Fernando Cabrita) all departed in the wake of the tournament and of course there was a Spanish goalkeeping blunder. Luis Arconada's fumble in the Final was extremely costly, though Robert Alexander claimed that "thankfully for the big Basque keeper, the Spanish fans and press were more delighted at reaching the Final than disappointed at losing it".

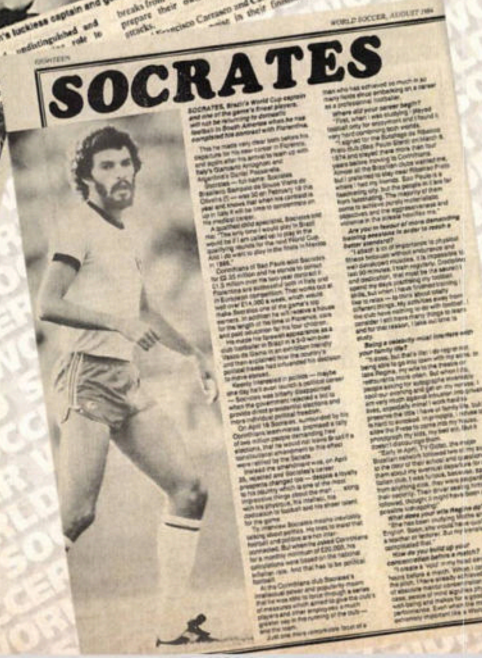
Elsewhere, the major news of the summer was the world record £6.4million transfer of Diego Maradona from Barcelona to Napoli. The move sparked a frenzy of anticipation in the Argentinian's new home city, and a 70,000 capacity crowd turned up at Naples' San Paolo stadium just to see him kick off a specially-arranged friendly between local youth teams.

There was big money surrounding another South American favourite arriving in Italy – Brazilian skipper Socrates, who was set to collect up to £1.5m during his two-year stay at Fiorentina.

Finally, pictured on his way out of the game as a player was Johan Cruyff, who had decided to quit for good (again) having helped Feyenoord to the Double in Holland.



Johan Cruyff lines up with his Feyenoord team-mates — Ivan Nielsen and Ruud Gullit — after what he described as his last official competitive match.



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